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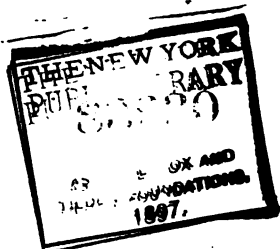
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THE
HOLY LYFE AND HISTORY
OF
SAYNT WERBURGE

VERY FRUTEFULL

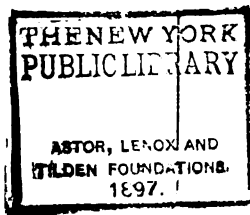
FOR ALL CHRISTEN PEOPLE TO REDE.

Bradshaw^{by} (Henry)

EDITED BY
EDWARD HAWKINS, ESQ.

PRINTED FOR THE CHETHAM SOCIETY.

M.DCCC.XLVIII.



LONDON :
PRINTED BY WILLIAM NICOL, PALM MALL.

INTRODUCTION.

A Society, established for the publication of historical and literary remains connected with the Palatine counties of Lancaster and Chester, could not fail to direct their early attention to the history of a person so illustrious by her birth, so reputed for the sanctity of her life, so memorable for her imputed miracles, and whose name is familiar to every inhabitant of these palatine counties as the patroness saint of the cathedral of the diocese. Amongst the earliest notices issued by the Society was an announcement of their intention to publish a reprint of Henry Bradshaw's *Life and History of St. Werburgh* from the very rare quarto of 1521, printed by Pynson. That intention is now fulfilled by the present volume, containing the poem of which "Harry Braddeshaa, of Chestre Abbay, monke," is partly author, partly translator.

In the "prologe of the translatour," as he calls himself, he says, p. 4.

I purpose to wryte a legende good and true
And translate a lyfe into Englysshe doubtles ;

and at p. 26 gives an account of the work, which he purposes to translate.

For as declareth, the true Passyonary
A boke wherin, her holy lyfe wryten is
Whiche boke remaineth, in Chester monastery

I purpose by helpe of Jhesu kynge of blys
 In any wyse to reherse, any sentence amys
 But folowe the legende, and true hystory
 After an humble style, and from it lytell vary.

These variations, be they "lytell" or much, seem to be founded upon histories and chronicles, which have been published, and are accessible to all who choose to trace the authorities for some of these legendary notices.

Unto this rude werke, myne auctours these shalbe
 Fyrst the true legende, and the venerable Bede
 Mayster Alfrydus, and Wyllyam Malvysburye
 Gyrarde Polycronycon, and other mo in deed. p. 5.

The "true legende" is doubtless the "true Passyonyary" mentioned above, which is afterwards called the "thrid Passyonyary ;"

And as the history, of her lyfe doth expresse
 In a boke nominat, the thrid passyonyary ; p. 120.

which also seems to have contained an account of more miracles than the translator was perhaps quite prepared to believe, or at least did not deem it quite expedient to publish at this time.

To expresse all myracles, written in the place
 In a boke nominate, the thrid passyonyarye
 It wolde require, a longe tyme and space
 To the reders tedious, (nomervayle sothly)
 Where we omytte, to writte of them specially
 But touched in generall, unto your audience. p. 197.

The poem is preceded by a "Prologe in honour and laude

of Sainte Werburge and to the prayse of the translatour by J. T.," whose name and profession we have been as little able to ascertain as was Herbert, when he first noticed this work.

Of the main body of the poem then Bradshaw must be considered as a translator from a work,* in the Latin language, then remaining in the library of Chester monastery, called the true or third Passionary, inserting such additional matter as he was pleased to extract from the various chronicles which he mentions. He was however not merely a translator, but an author, for the "Prologes" to the first and second books, pp. 1 and 134, "A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine Saynte Werburge," p. 205, and the "breve conclusion," p. 207, are certainly original compositions of Bradshaw himself, and it is not improbable that he was also author of chapters 21 and 22, in the second book, being "A breve rehearsall of the myracles of Saynt Werburge after her translacion to Chestre," and "A charitable

* The author of the original work here translated is not known, nor was Bradshaw himself acquainted with his name, for in "a Balade to the auctour," published with the translation the very year in which it was concluded, is mentioned (p. 210) that "uncertayne was his name."

Warton observes "a great translator of the lives of the Saxon Saints from the Saxon, in which language only they were then extant, into Latin, was Goscelinus, a monk of St. Austin at Canterbury, who passed from France into England about 1058. Among the rest were the lives of St. Werburgh, St. Ethelred and St. Sexburgh, most probably the legends which were Bradshaw's originals." This conjecture can scarcely be reconciled to the above assertion with regard to the original author, that "uncertayne was his name."

mocion and desyre to all the inhabytauntes within the Countie Palatine of Chestre for the monasterie."

The poem is written in stanzas of seven lines each, of which the first and third, the second, fourth and fifth, and the sixth and seventh, rhyme with each other. To this arrangement there are a few exceptions; at p. 153 is a stanza of eight lines, of which the first and third, the second, fourth, fifth and seventh, the sixth and eighth, rhyme with each other. At pp. 115, 116, 126, are three stanzas similarly arranged, in which three cases however the last line is Latin. Chapters 21, 22 and 23, and two balades at pp. 211 and 212 are all written in similar stanzas of eight lines.

Throughout the poem, in order to produce, in reading, anything of rythmical intonation, the accent must be laid strongly upon the very last syllable of the line, even in cases where, according to the modern mode of pronunciation, the last syllable is as little dwelt upon as possible. Every stanza affords instances of this intonation, and it is scarcely necessary to refer to any particular passages, but in p. 125, the following illustrations may be observed, — gostly and remedy, parte and trinite, odour, savour, hour; body, clergy, verily, &c. &c.

The Latin language was probably very familiar to our author, for the reader can scarcely fail to be struck with the frequent introduction of quaint Latinisms. At p. 150 we find "With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England." In the same page he talks of faith enduring "without recidivation," and in p. 152, of faith being "remanent;" we find "promyttynge," p. 163, 166; "facundious," p. 209,

210 ; “desydery,” 56, and several others may be discovered by consulting the glossary. The greater number of these words it will be perceived were derived directly from the Latin, but not unfrequently, as is most usual in writers of that age, the Latinisms appear to have been introduced under the influence of the French language upon our own, rather than directly from the Latin. At p. 153, he speaks of St. Alban’s monastery being edified, from *edifier* ; p. 115, of this life being *caduce* ; p. 137, of the abbey of Chester envired with walles ; baptism is written baptym, *baptime* ; convent, *covent* ; sautyng, from *assaut* ; and dygne of dutye, from *digne*. The termination of the past tense, derived from the Latin participle, is of almost universal occurrence, as maculate, preparate, coronate, nominat, tumulate, &c. &c.

At pp. 147, 158 and 179 are quotations from Henry of Huntingdon, which contain some errors ; it is as well therefore to reprint them here from Savile’s edition of that author.

p. 147.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitatis honorem
 Armipotens Alfrede dedit, probitasque laborem,
 Perpetuumque labor nomen, cui mixta dolori
 Gaudia semper erant ; spes semper mixta timori.
 Si modo victor eras, ad crastina bella pavebas.
 Si modo victus eras, ad crastina bella parabas.

Jam post transactos vitæ regnique dolores
 Christus ei sit vera quies, sceptrumque perenne.

Henrici Huntingdoniensis, Hist. lib. v.

p. 158.

O Elfreda potens, O terror virgo virorum
 Victrix naturæ, nomine digna viri.
 Tu quo splendidior fieres, natura puellam,
 Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri
 Te mutare decet sed solam, nomina sexus,
 Tu regina potens, rexque trophæa parans.
 Jam nec Cæsarei tantum meruere triumphi
 Cæsare splendidior virgo virago vale. *Ibid.*

p. 179.

Auctor opum, vindex scelerum, largitor honorum,
 Sceptryger Edgarus regna superna petit.
 Hic alter Salomon, legum pater, orbita pacis;
 Quod caruit bellis claruit inde magis.
 Templâ Deo, templis monachos, monachis dedit agros
 Nequitæ lapsum, justitiæque locum. *Ibid.*

In the quotation from William of Malmsbury, p. 176, in the last line, for "a" read "de."

The first book of this poem contains an account of the descent of St. Werburge from four royal families, her character, the history of her life and those of some of her more immediate relations; it also relates the principal circumstances of her death and subsequent removal and condition of her body. The second book is chiefly devoted to the circumstances which connected her with the city of Chester, of which she was considered the patron saint. The author at p. 4 calls her prioress and lady of the Abbey of Chester: but she was never so, except under the general appointment of Ethelred, who made her (p. 85)

lady ruler and presydent
 Over all the nonnes, of every monastery
 Within his realme.

Ethelred indeed (p. 86)

Edyfyed a collage chyrche, notable and famous
 In the subbarbes of Chester, pleasaunt and beauteous
 In honour of God, and the Baptyst Saynt Johan,

but it does not appear that she had any authority in this establishment, and indeed this foundation had not any connexion with the Abbey of Chester.

It is probable that he calls her "Pryores" of the Abbey merely because she was enshrined there, and was considered the patroness saint of that monastery and city.

To this imputed patronage of the city and its religious establishments we doubtless owe the existence of this poem; for when the translator felt that as "a relygyous man, losynge of tyme could not him excuse, and that for avoiding such great folyshenes he ressolved

Some small treatyse to wryte brevely" p. 4.

there can be little doubt that he was led to the choice of his subject from a desire to do honour to

Blessed vyrgyn Werburge, my holy patronesse, p. 5.

indeed he acknowledges as much in his "breve conclusion,"

The cause movyng us, this werke to begyn
 It was to avoyde, slouth and idelnes
 And most for the love, of this holy virgin
 Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones. p. 209.

The reader will probably not be displeased that this poem should be accompanied by Warton's criticisms and estimate of its character, which are, therefore, here quoted at length.

“ Henry Bradshaw has rather larger pretensions to poetical fame than William of Nassington, although scarcely deserving the name of an original writer in any respect. Before the year 1500 he wrote the *Life of St. Werburge*, a daughter of a King of the Mercians, in English verse. This poem, beside the devout deeds and passion of the poet's patroness saint, comprehends a variety of other subjects; as a description of the kingdom of the Mercians, the lives of Saint Ethelred and Saint Werburge, the foundation of the city of Chester and a chronicle of our Kings. It is collected from Bede, Alfred of Beverley, Malmesbury, Gerardus Cambrensis, Higden's *Polychronicon*, and the *Passionaries* of the female Saints Werburgh, Ethelred and Sexburgh, which were kept for public edification in the choir of our poet's monastery. Bradshaw is not so fond of relating visions and miracles as his argument seems to promise. Although concerned with three saints, he deals more in plain facts than in the fictions of religious romance; and, on the whole, his performance is rather historical than legendary. This is remarkable in an age when it was the fashion to turn history into legend.

“ His fabulous origin of Chester is not so much to be imputed to his own want of veracity as to the authority of his voucher, Ranulph Higden, a celebrated chronicler, his countryman, and a monk of his own abbey. He supposes

that Chester, called by the ancient Britons *Caer Lleon*, or, the city of legions was founded by *Leon gaur*, a giant, corrupted from *Leon vaur*, a great legion.

The founder of Chestre, as sayth Policronicon
Was Lleon Gauer, a myghty stronge gyaunt
Whiche buylded caves, and dongions many one
No goodly buyldyng, propre ne pleasaunt — p. 148.

he adds with equal attention to etymology,

But the Kynge Leil, a Briton sure and valiaunt
Was founder of Chestre, by pleasaunt buyldyng
And of Caerleil, also named by the kynge. p. 148.

But a greater degree of credulity would perhaps have afforded him a better claim to the character of a poet; and, at least we should have conceived a more advantageous opinion of his imagination had he been less frugal of those traditionary fables, in which ignorance and superstition had clothed every head of his argument.

“The most splendid passage of this poem is the description of the feast (ch. xvi. pp. 58—65) made by King Wulfer in the Hall of the Abbey of Ely when his daughter Werburge was admitted to the veil in that monastery; among other curious anecdotes of ancient manners, the subjects of the tapestry with which the hall was hung, and of the songs sung by the minstrels on this solemn occasion, are given at large.

“If there be any merit of imagination or invention to which the poet has a claim in this description, it altogether consists in the application. The circumstances themselves

are faithfully copied by Bradshaw from what his own age actually presented. In this respect, I mean as a picture of ancient life, the passage is interesting, and for no other reason. The versification is infinitely inferior to Lydgate's worst manner.

"Bale, a violent reformer, observes that our poet was a person remarkably pious for the times in which he flourished. This is an indirect satire on the monks and on the period which preceded the Reformation. I believe it will readily be granted that our author had more piety than poetry. His prologue contains humble professions of his inability to treat lofty subjects and to please light readers."

Warton's remarks are too disparaging; Dibdin, who gives an extended account of the poem, forms a higher estimate of Bradshaw's merit. "It is presumed," he observes, "that his name will stand among the foremost in the list of the poets of the period wherein he wrote. His descriptions are oftentimes happy as well as minute; and there is a tone of moral purity and rational piety in his thoughts, enriched by the legendary lore of romance that renders many passages of his poem exceedingly interesting."

If it is not allowed to rank Bradshaw, according to Dibdin's estimate, among the foremost in the list of poets of his period, it is unjust to place him in so low a rank among his cotemporaries as the severity of Warton seems to demand. There is a tone of moral principle and devotional piety so unaffectedly pervading the whole volume, and so easily and naturally introduced, as to impress the reader with the conviction that they had an

habitual influence upon his mind and heart, and exhibited themselves without an effort and almost unconsciously in all his expressions. There is much strength and apparent sincerity in his numerous exhortations to piety and devotion. In his "charitable mocion," (ch. xxii. p. 199 et seq.) he urges his readers to benevolence and to the support of the monastery, with great power, and sets before them every variety of motive that could be supposed to influence persons under the peculiar circumstances in which each might be placed. He appeals to the piety of their forefathers, and endeavours to work upon all their passions, affections and emotions, upon their love and fear, gratitude and duty. His familiarity with the Latin language has been already noticed, and the reader can scarcely have failed to observe his intimate acquaintance with the sacred writings, numerous scripture personages are adduced as models and examples of the various virtues, which adorn the christian character; and the language of scripture is constantly apparent in his exhortations and descriptions, especially where the character and acts of St. Werburge are his subjects. Moral maxims and proverbs, the concentrated wisdom of ages, seem to have been familiar to him, and may be detected in many of his pages. If

Manners maketh man
Quoth William of Wykeham,

Bradshaw observes,

by a proverbe certain
Good maners and conynge maken a man, p. 134.

another of his proverbs is worth pointing out, as it exem-

plifies the use of the word "lad" to signify a person of low degree,

by a proverb auneynt

A lad to wedde a lady is an inconvenyent. p. 38.

The sententious brevity of a proverb is sometimes lost and weakened by adapting it to the metre of his poem; Man proposes, God disposes, is expanded into

Tho mankynde prepose his mynde to fulfyll

Yet God dysposeth all thyng at his wyll. p. 119.

The remark of Warton is probably just, that had he had a greater degree of credulity he would have had a greater chance of being poetical; credulity indeed does not seem to be his failing, for though he records many miracles of St. Werburge and with some appearance of belief in their reality, it is quite clear that he omits many marvellous tales, which might have been supplied by the original work, but which would be to the "reders tedious (no mervayle sothly)," and to which he was not himself quite prepared to give full credit. It is true that he gives more, many more, than sufficient to satisfy any modern readers; but the Reformation was approaching, the shadows of coming events were already apparent, and were exerting their almost unobserved influence upon the feelings and opinions of the people, and Bradshaw had evidently less faith in the miraculous legends of his monastery, than had been enjoyed by his predecessors; in truth there appears to be occasionally a lurking humour in his description, which betrays as much disbelief in his own narrative, as the temper of the times, and the still lingering credulity of his cotemporaries would permit. If his

own good sense and the growing enfranchisement of the period from the bondage of superstition, and papal impositions, checked in him any tendency to imaginative flights and poetic paroxysms; it will not be denied that he frequently exhibits considerable strength of expression in his language, and great powers in his vivid and graphic descriptions. A goodly specimen of railing may be found in Book I. ch. x. where St. Ermenylde, St. Werburge and her brothers severely rebuke Werbode for his "grevous presumpcyon" in aspiring to the hand of St. Werburge. Many of the miraculous cures are described with great force; and it will be difficult to find, in any cotemporary author, so lively, picturesque and humorous a narrative as that of the unhappy geese of Wedon

who went

Mekely as yf they had reason naturall
Unto her presence,

and with

Theyr wynges traylynge entred into the hall. p. 98, 99.

Had his merits as a writer been less than they really are, his meek and humble apology for his defects, which he puts forth in his "breve conclusion," would deprecate all severity of criticism. He had clearly not a musical ear, his versification is not smooth and harmonious, and his naturally defective appreciation of rythmical intonation has been much exaggerated by the awkward and difficult arrangement of the stanza which he has adopted. With an easier metre his lines might have flowed with more ease and grace, and would have better conciliated the favour of his readers.

Rugged however and harsh as his verse may be, and low as may be the estimation of Bradshaw as a poet, the amiable and pious tone of the whole poem cannot but impress the mind with agreeable feelings, and excite admiration and affection towards him as a man and a christian.

Of Henry Bradsha, Braddshaa or Bradshaw, who calls himself, p. 3, "a religious man," *i. e.* an ecclesiastic, nothing more is known than what is recorded by Anthony Wood, who says, "he was born in the auncient town of Westchester, commonly called the city of Chester, and being much addicted to religion and learning, when a youth, was received among the Benedictine monks of St. Werburgh's monastery in the said city. Thence at riper years he was sent to Gloucester college in the suburb of Oxon, where after he had passed his course in theology among the novices of his order he returned to his cell at St. Werburge and in his elder years wrote, *De antiquitate et magnificentia urbis Cestriæ chronicon, etc.* and translated from Latin into English a book which he thus entitled, *The life of the glorious Virgin St. Werburge: Also many miracles that God had shewed for her.* London, 1521, 4to. He died in fifteen hundred and thirteen (5 Henry 8) and was buried in his monastery, leaving then behind him other matters to posterity, but the subject of which they treat I know not."—Athen. Oxon. edit. by Dr. Bliss, v. I. p. 18.

The date of his death is expressly stated in "A balade to the auctor," which is appended to the poem, by some unknown friend, and, probably, monk of the same monastery.

He laments the death of Bradshaw,

a floure most riall
 Redolent in cronicles with historicall syght
 Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lyght
 The present yere of this translacion
 M.D.XIII. of Christis incarnation
 Cujus anime propicietur deus. p. 210.

Of the works of Bradshaw above mentioned or alluded to, that "De antiquitate et magnificentia," etc., nothing is now known, but it is not improbable that some fragments dispersed in various MSS. descriptive of this city may have been extracted from his chronicle. The life of the glorious virgin St. Werburge is the work which is here reprinted. Of the "other matters to posterity" nothing more is positively known to us than to Wood, but Mr. Herbert was in possession of a poem, "The lyfe of St. Radegunde," also printed by Pynson, of which he says, "although the name of the author or translator of this book does not decidedly appear on the face of it, yet on comparing it with the Life of St. Werburge it may readily be perceived that both were penned by the same person, Henry Bradshaw; but hitherto omitted in every list of his works." *Typographical Antiquities*, p. 294.

Mr Cowper in his Summary of the life of St. Werburgh quotes more than once the Latin life of this lady by Bradshaw, and these extracts he derives from Leland's *Collectanea*, but where this collector discovered his original authority does not appear. Mr. Cowper is probably mistaken in ascribing the work to Bradshaw's own pen; it is much more probable

that the extracts are derived from the original chronicle or passionary, which Bradshaw translated into English verse, for he has himself distinctly stated that his poem was a translation from a Latin history preserved in his monastery; he gives no intimation of his having written it himself, and it is also stated that the name of the original author was unknown.

Although this work is of very great rarity, it is not so much so as was at one time supposed. The earliest mention of the book, which we have discovered, is by Maittaire, who in 1741 inserts it in a list of books not before noticed. In 1749, Ames in his *Typographical Antiquities*, mentions the work, and so describes it as to leave no doubt of his having had a copy before him. Notwithstanding all this, Dr. Foote Gower in his "*Sketch of Materials for the History of Cheshire*" in 1771, doubts the existence of such a printed volume; and in a subsequent advertisement, arguing upon the evidence for and against the existence of such a work, adds "no possible enquiries of mine have been able to discover the least trace of it, in any private as well as in any public repository," and closes the difficulty with the good humoured expression of Sir Roger de Coverly, "that much may be said on both sides."

There are, however, at least five copies in existence; one is in the Minster Library at York, and my kind friend Mr. Davies informs me that it is in modern binding, that it is imperfect at the beginning, wanting the first 22 pages, the first present leaf being C. 1. on page 23, that it is otherwise

clean and in good preservation. It once belonged to Dr. Marmaduke Fothergill, and in the margin of one of the leaves near the close of the book, appears the name of Gervas Clifton, to whom it had at one time probably belonged.

Two copies are in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, one of which had been purchased at Warwick, July 2, 1730, by Mr. West, at the sale of whose books in 1773, it was bought by Mr. Gough, for £2. 15s. and with the other treasures of his collection now reposes in the Bodleian.

The other copy belonging to the same library bears the autographs of former owners "Wylliā. Watson," and "Richard Cartwright," "Homfree," "William Peate," "John, and Mary Seres," and on one margin appears "John . . (cut off.)"

So God me save he is a loute
I put you all out of doute
By me John Beade, draper."

It was subsequently the property of Selden, from whom it passed to the Bodleian.

A fourth copy is in the British Museum. In the sale catalogue of the books of Mr. Marten of Palgrave, in lot 196, was a *Life of St. Werburgh*, which is supposed to be the same copy which came into the Pearson Library, which was sold in 1788, (lot 2374 the *Life of St. Werburgh*) and was bought by Isaac Reed for £1. 3s. At his sale in 1807 it formed lot 6972, and was purchased by I. L., i. e. I. Lochee, the auctioneer in King Street, Covent Garden, for £18. He is supposed to have purchased it for Mr. Parke, the editor and enlarger of Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, who

afterwards sold it for 28 guineas to Mr. Heber, who inserted in the volume the following note. "This book is of the first order of rarity, not being in the Royal, British Museum, Bodleian, Spencer, Hunter, Blenheim, or Blandford collections, indeed no other copy is known to exist in any repository public or private, except one in Mr. Heber's library. Mr. Heber paid 28 guineas to Mr. P— for his copy 10 years ago, a time when 5*s.* went further in the purchase of a scarce book than a pound sterling does now." This note upon a scrap of paper was probably intended as a communication to some friend, perhaps to Mr. Dibdin, and, after having been copied for that purpose, was pasted into the volume as it now appears. At Mr. Heber's sale in 1834 it was purchased for the British Museum for £19. 5*s.*

The fifth copy is probably the one stated by Herbert, in his edition of Ames' *Typographical Antiquities*, to have been then in his own possession, and which is supposed to have passed into the hands of Mr. Woodhouse, in whose sale in 1803 it was lot 859, and was sold to Mr. Hill, the prototype of Paul Pry, for £31. 10*s.* This gentleman's library, rich in early poetry, was sold to Messrs. Longman, and Co., and was the foundation of their "*Bibliotheca Anglo-poetica*," in which this book was priced £63., and sold to Mr. Midgely, whose library was brought to the hammer in 1818 at Messrs. Saunders, when this rare volume was purchased by Mr. Hibbert for £42. At this gentleman's sale it was purchased by Thorpe for £19. 10*s.*, from whom it passed to the library of Mr. Miller, the present possessor.

It may be remarked that this work is the earliest, in print, which refers to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and his dignity in the earldom, see pp. 181, 182. The passage was cited in an affidavit made in 1843 in "the Consistory Court of Chester," and appears in an Appendix to an appeal from "the Chancery Court of York, in the goods of Anne Rothwell Wignall, commonly called Anne Rothwell, Spinster, deceased, in the Judicial Committee of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council."

The errors in this reprint that may be chargeable to the press occur at

page 18, line 9, T *read* To,

page 94, line 10, ha *read* had,

page 99, line 15, compassyon *read* compassyon,

and page 112, last line but one, Gorrupte *read* Corrupte ; but it is to be feared that some trifling errors in transcription, such as kingdome for kyndome, befound for befounde, us for vs, would be discovered by an accurate collation. Pynson is not uniform in the use of his i, his y, and the insertion or omission of the final e.

The collation of the book is thus : it commences with the Title-page and Wood-cut of St. Werburge, The prologe of J. T. and the Table of the boke, the second Title-page, with

the Wood-cut repeated and reiterated at the back, and then follows the Poem, commencing with signature **a** and ending on **g iiii.**, the reverse bearing Pynson's device.

a ii	containing pages	1 to 14		k	„	„	111 to 118
b	„	15 — 22		l	„	„	119 — 134
c	„	23 — 38		m	„	„	135 — 142
d	„	39 — 46		n	„	„	143 — 158
e	„	47 — 62		o	„	„	159 — 166
f	„	63 — 70		p	„	„	167 — 182
g	„	71 — 86		q	„	„	183 — 190
h	„	87 — 94		r	„	„	191 — 206
i	„	95 — 110		s	„	„	207 — 214

A Glossary and Index are added.

The following genealogical tables are drawn up from the third chapter of the Poem, which professes to trace the descent of St. Werburge from four "Kynges of this lande, and of the riall blodde of Fraunce." Table V. has been compiled from the other four. They do not profess to be correct genealogies, nor has any attempt been made to reconcile the discrepancies which occur in various chronicles, nor even in this history. They are merely intended as aids to the reader by presenting to him, in a tabular form, that which the author gives as narrative.

Cryda, King of
Mercia, A. D.
594.

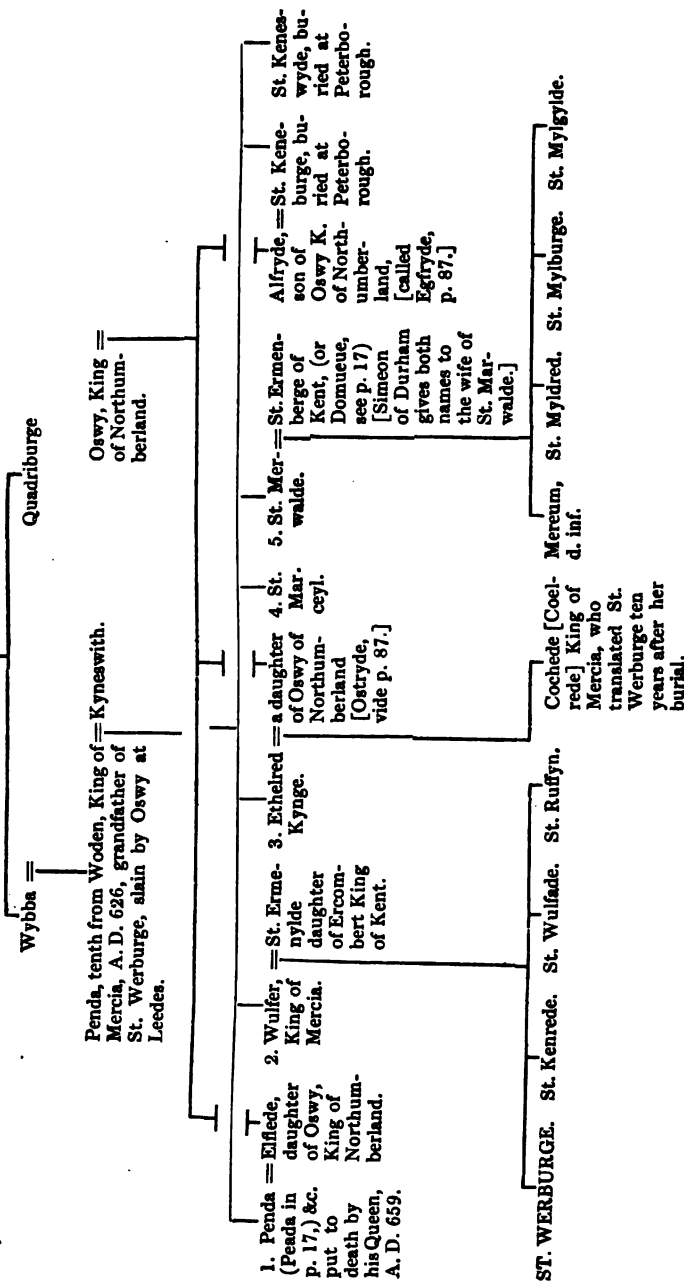
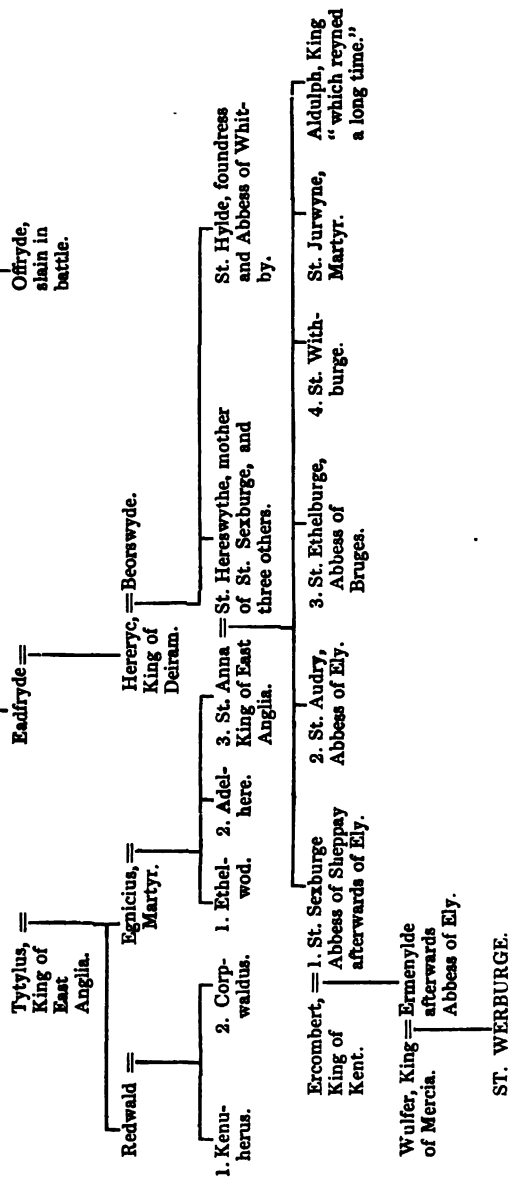


TABLE II. & III.

"Regnum Northumbro-
rum ex parte
matris," p. 12.

"Regnum Estanglorum ex parte
matris," p. 12.



ST. WERBURGE.

TABLE IV.
"Regnum Cantiae et
Francie ex parte ma-
tris," pp. 14, 15.

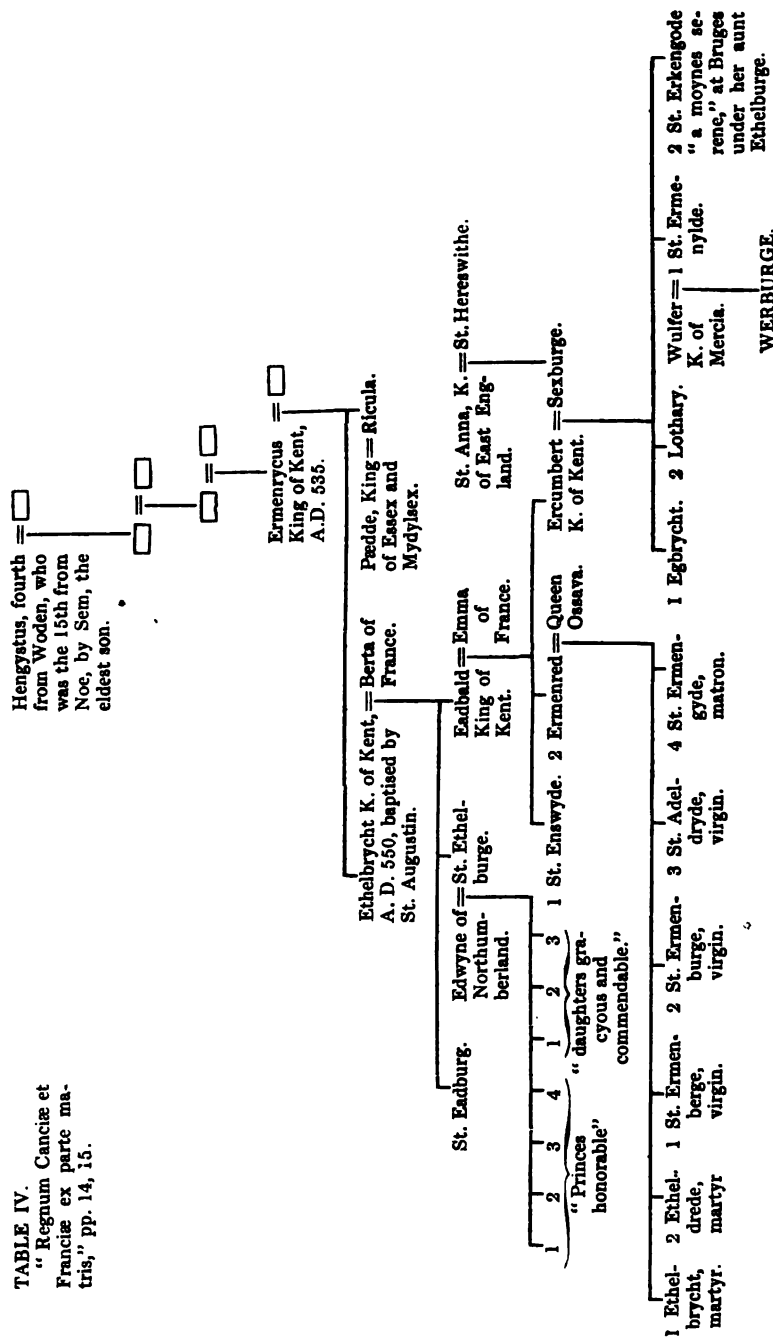
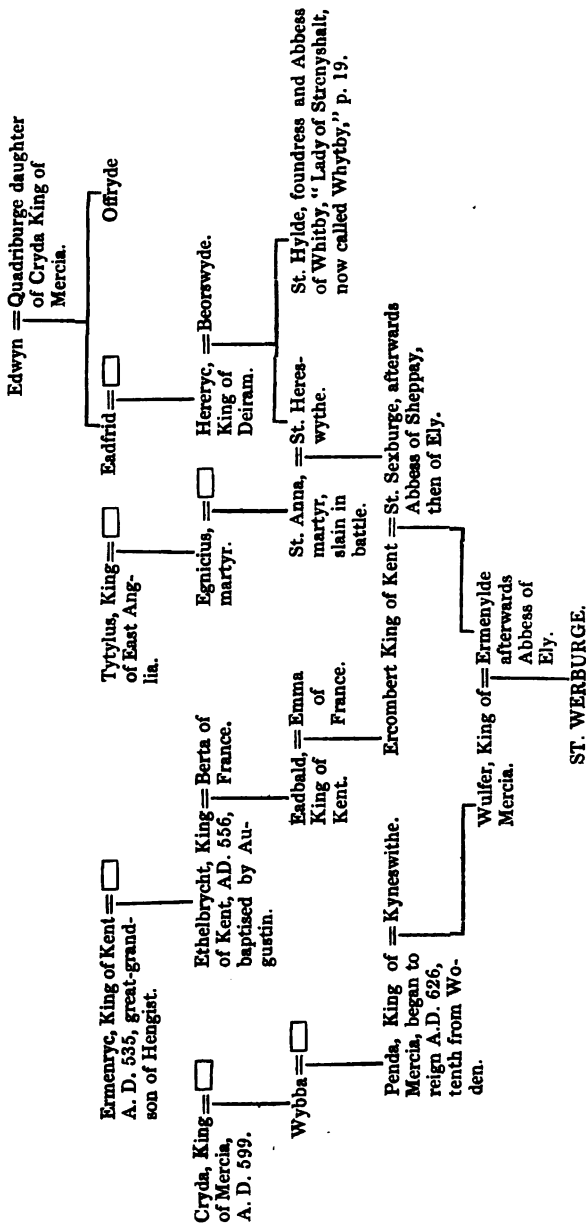


TABLE V.



**¶ Here begynneth the holy lyfe and history
of saynt werburge / very frutefull
for all christen people
to rede.**



The prologe of J.C. in the honour & laude of saint
Merburge / and to the prayse of y^r translatour
of the legende folowynge.

Honour / ioye / and glorie / the toynes organycall
Endeles myrthes wth melodies / prayse ye all y^r princes
Nourished in vertue / intact / as pure as cristall
Relese to all synners / o werburge lady maistres
In grace thou passed / all other and in goodnes
Whan thou was present in this mundayne lyfe
None was the lyke / wydowe / mayde / ne wyfe

By diuyn grace / to be a ryche present
Reioyce we may / in Merburge one and all
A gemme of vertue / a birgin resplendent
Dilect of our lorde (in ioye and blis eternall
Surely she is set) to intercede and call
Her mouth nat cessyng / for them to call and crye
And in her trust / of synne to haue mercy

O good lady maistres / declpne thy syght afer
And graciously beholde / thy seruaunt chaste and pure
Henry Bradsha / sometyme monke in Chester
Whiche only for thy loue / toke the payne and labour
Thy legende to translate / he dyd his busy cure
Out of latine / in Englishe rude ande and byle
Whiche he hath amended / with many an ornate stile

Alas of Chestre / ye monkes haue lost a treasure
Henry Bradsha / the styfe of eloquence
Chestre thou may wayle / the deth of this flour

So may the citezens / alas for his absence
So may many other / for lacke of his sentence
O swete lady Werburge / an holy Abbasse glorious
Remembre Henry Bradsha / thy seruānt most gracio^s

In hym remaind no vice ne presumption
Enuy and wrath / from hym were expulld
Slouth ne Aenys in hym had no dominion
Avarice and glotony / he bitterly expelled
No vice in hym reigned / his felowes he excelled
As cleane as cristall / he bare these vertues thre
Chastite / obidience / and wylfull pouerte

O cruell deth / whiche art the perfitte ende
Of this noble clerke / and euery mortall thyng
Agaynst the / no man may hym defende
Thou causest wo / langour / and anguisslyng
And who on this / wolde haue remembryng
Howe from erth / to erth he must agayne
He wolde dispise all thynges that be mundayne. Vale.

The table of this boke.

T First the prologue of the translatour of this litell
treatyse Cap.i.

A description of the realme of merciēs of the boūdes
and commodites of the same Cap.ii.

A description of the geanologie of saynt Werburge
and howe she descended of .iiii. kynges of this lāde / and
of the riall blodde of fraunce Cap.iii.

C ii.

¶ A playn descripcion of the actz and chivalry of kyng
Penda grautfather to saynt Werburge / and of his no-
ble and vertuous progenie. Ca.iii.

¶ Howe after the deth of kyng Pēda / and of his prince
Pēda his secōde son Wulfer father of saynt Werburge
was elect to be kyng of merciens. Cap.b.

¶ A lyttell descripcyon of the noble maryage bytwene
kyng Wulfer and saynt Ermenild, the kyngz daughter
of Kent / and of the solempnite done at the same season
The syxt chapitre.

¶ A breue declaracion of the holy lyfe and conuersaciō
of saynt Werburge / bled in her tender youth / aboue the
comon cours of nature. Cap.bii.

¶ Howe this yonge virgin saynt Werburge was des-
red of dukes and erles in mariage / and of the reasona-
ble answer she gaue to them in auoydyng suche word-
ly pleasures. Cap.biii.

¶ Howe the false Werhode desyred kynge Wulfer to
haue his daughter Werburge in mariage / and howe he
graunted therinto. Cap.ix.

¶ Howe the quene saynt Ermenild, wolde nat consent
therto / & how her bretherne saynt Wulfade / and Ruffin
were agaynst the sayd mariage. Cap.x.

¶ How the false Werhode complayned vpon saynt

¶ **Wulfade & Ruffyn to kyng Wulfer/and was the cause
of their deth.** Cap.xi.

¶ **Howe kyng Wulfer was conuerted / and toke great
repentaunce for his offence . and by the counsell of saint
Ceade was a deuout man / and a good benefactour to
holy churche/and founder of diuers places** Cap.xii.

¶ **Of the feruent desire & singular deuocion saynt Wer-
burge had to be religious / and of the dayly supplicati-
ons she made to her father for the same.** Cap.xiii.

¶ **Of the reasonable & meke answere saynt Werburge
gaue to her father / whan he moued her to haue ben ma-
ried.** Cap.xiiii.

¶ **How saint Werburge was made an none at Ely aft-
her desire vnder saint Audri lady and abbasse.** Ca.xv.

¶ **Of the great solemnisation kyng Wulfer made at y^r
gostly mariage of saynt Werburge his dought at Ely /
to all his louers and frendes.** Cap.xvi.

¶ **Of the holy profession and gostly cōuersacion saynt
Werburge bled at Ely i religio vnd^r saint Audri.** xvii.

**A litell treatise of the lyfe of saynt Audrie abbasse of
Ely / & of her holy conuersacion & great deuocion which
Audrie was aunt and colyn to saynt Werburge.** xviii.

¶ **A breue reherſal of the lyfe of saint Serburge graūt**
¶.iii.

moder to saint werburge / & of her comyng to Ely to her
lyst Audrie thabbasse from Shepay monasterie. c.xix.

¶ Howe saint Ermenild, after dethe of kyng Mulfer
was made a nounge at Ely / vnder her moder Serburge
and Werburge her doughter. Cap.xx.

¶ Howe kyng Ethelrede seynge the holy conuersaciō
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and president at
Medon / Trentā / & Hambury. Also by her example and
counsel made hym a monke at Bardeney abbay. c.xxi.

¶ The holy cōuersaciō of kyng Kēred brother to saynt
Werburge / & howe he refused his crowne / & was made
a monke at Rome / & there deptyd a holy cōfessour. xxi.

¶ Of the gostly deuociō of saynt Werburge & bertuo'
gouernans of her places / and of the great humilite she
bled to her systers and all creatures. Ca.xxii.

¶ Howe at Medō wilde gyse were pynned at her cōmā-
dement / and also relefed & put at liberte. Ca.xxiii.

¶ How a tyrande without pite was punysshed his face
set backewarde / and by his mekenes was restaured to
helth and prosperite agayne. Cap.xxv.

¶ How deuers princes folowynge sensualite entēdynge
to violate this virgine by power : by myracle were put
to confusio. Cap.xxvi.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowlege to her systers

of her departure / & howe she ordeed in vertue her sayd
monasteries after her departure. Cap.xxvii.

¶ Of the gostly exortaciō saint Merburge made to her
systers in her sekenes / and howe deuoutly she receyued
the sacramētes of holy churche afore her deth. c.xxviii.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Merburge at Crētā vnto
heuen frō this miserable lyfe / & what lamētacion her sy-
sters and subiectes made for her deth. Ca.xxix.

¶ Howe the hāburgenſe toke the blessed body of Mer-
burge frō Trentā by myracle & brought it to Hābury /
and of the buriall of this virgin / and manyfolde signes
shewed of god by her merites / the space of .ix. yere afore
her translatiō. Cap.xxx.

¶ A litel breue treatise of her hole lyfe / and how for her
myacles shewed after her deth / the couent of Hamburi
purposed to trāslat her body by helpe of kyng Coelrede
reignyng in mercelande. Ca.xxxi.

¶ The solempne translatiō of this glorious virgine
saynt Merburge . and of the great myacles done at the
same season by the might of god / and merite of this gra-
cious lady. Ca.xxxii.

¶ Howe the body of saynt Merburge continued hole /
& substācial at Hābury after y^e trāslatiō by the space
of .CC. yeres / tyll the danes were comon to this lande /
or it fell & resolued was vnto powder. Cap.xxxiii.

■ Here foloweth the lyfe of the glory-
ous vīrgyn saynt werbūrgē / also
many mīracles that god hath
shewed for her / & fyrst the
prologe of the au-
ctour.





The prologe of the translatour of this lytell werke y^e
lyfe of saynt Werburge.



When Phebus had roſe his cours i ſagittari
And Capricorne entred a ſygne retrograt
Amyddes Decēbre / y^e ayre colde & froſty
And pale Lucyna / the erthe dyd illumynat
I roſe bp ſhortly / fro my cubycle preparat
Aboute mydnyght / and caſt in myne intent
How I myght ſpende / the tyme conuenient.

I called vnto mynde / the great buſtedfaſtneſſe
Of this wretched worlde / not by cours of nature
How there be brought / ſome men to buſynes
Oppreſſed with pouerte / langour / and dyſpleaſure
Some other exalted / to ſelycyte and pleaſure
The maker of mankynde / moſt in maieste
Ruleth all at his wyll / it may non other be.

Beholde dyſcretly / and ſe the ſyrmament
Conſyder the ſonne / and the mone alſo
With all the planettes / and ſterres reſplendent
How they kepe theyr cours / bothe to and fro
Euer obedyent / theyr creature vnto
And byrdes beſely ſyngynge euery day
Prayſynge theyr prymate all that they may.

The iiij elementes / in lyke condycyon
The fyre / the water / the ayre / and the londe
Obſerben theyr duty / after theyr creacon
And burum ben / and euer ſo be ſonde
Thus euery creature / as we underſtonde
Werburge

Obeeth to his creature / with humylte
Except dyssolute man / folowynge sensualyte.

If man wyll remembre / how he was create
To the lykenes and figure / of god almyghty
And set in paradyse / a place moost delycate
To haue the fruytyon / of eternall glory /
If not synne expulsed hym / to the bale of mysery
But that he wolde enclyne / his naturall reason
To serue his maker / truely at due season.

Dyuers people / haue dyuers condicions
Comynly proued / it is euery day .
Some set to vertu / and good disposycions
In penaunce / prayer / all that they may
Some in contemplacyon / the sothe to say
Some in abstinence / to chastyce the body
And make it subget / to the soule perfyte.

Some other reioyce / in synne and ydelnes
Some seruauntes to Venus / both day and nyght
Other to couetyse / and worldly besynes
Some to deceyue / by subtylte in syght
Some into marchandysse / & wyngynge full ryght
Some ferefull and tymorous / without audacyte
Some sadde and sobre / and of great graunte.

Many haue pleasure to speke of rybaudry
Some of syghtynge / braulynge / and actes marcyall
Other to flater / and paynt the company
Some to syt bytweene the cuppe and the wall
Some to blasphemie / and dyssemble withall

To backbyte and sclaūder / by malyce and enby
Some to extorcyon / thefte and playne robry.

Thus after fraylte / and sundry compleccyons
Dyuers men dyuers in luyng there be
Dysposed by a contrary dysposycyon
Some vnto vertue / some vnto vanyte
Many maners of people / now we may se
Clauerynge in the worlde / without quyetnes
As a shyp by tempest / is dryuen doubles.

When I reuolued / with due circumstance
The dyuers maners / and mutabylte
Of worldly people / and the great varyaunce
And how this lyfe / is of no suerte
Now in great langour / now in prosperyte
Yet after our meryte / we shal be sure
To be rewarded / at our departure.

Chan to vertuous labours / we shulde apply
And spende not our tyme / all in ydlenes
For as a byrde is made / by nature to fly
Ryght so we shulde vse / some good busynes
To our soule helthe / with great mekenes
For tyme euyl spende in labours hayne
Is harde to be well / recouered agayne

But now syth I am / a relyggyous man
For losynge of tyme / can not me excuse
Therefore I purpose / to do as I can
All suche ydlenes / whylom to refuse
With the grace of god / the tyme for to vse
Werburge.

Some small treatyse / to wryte breuely
To the comyn bulgares theyr mynde to satysfy.

To descrybe hys hystories / I dare not be so bolde
Syth it is a mater / for clerkes conuenient
As of the. vii. aeges / and of our parentes olde
Or of the. iiii. empyres / whylom moost excellent
Knowynge my lernynge / therto insufficyent
As for bawdy balades / ye shall haue none of me
To excyte lyght hertes / to pleasure and vanpety.

But now in auoydynge / suche great folysshenes
I purpose to wryte / a legende good and true
And translate a lyfe / into Englyshe doubtles
I meane the spouse / of our lorde Ihesu
Blessed saynt Werburge / replete with vertue
A noble prynces borne / a byrgyne pure and glorious
After an holy monyall / and an abbesse gracious.

In the abbay of Chestre / she is thryned ryghely
Pryores and lady / of that holy place
The chyef protectryce / of the sayd monastery
Longe before the conquest / by deuyn grace
Protectryce of the Cytee / she is and euer was
Called specyall prymate / and pryncypall presydent
There rulynge vnder / our lorde omnyppotent.

And yf I unworthy / begynne this lytell werke
I praye all the reders / mekely of pardon
To correcke and amende / syth I am no clerke
Excuse my ignoraunce / and take the entencion
My mynde is to shewe / her lyfe and deuocyon

That euery man and woman / ensample maye take
At this pure byrgyn / synne to forsake.

And syth that she is in blysse now gloryfied
It were no reason / her name be had in scyence
But to the people / her name be magnyfied
To her laude and prayse / honour and reuerence
Her parentes and bretherne / y^e floures of experyence
Haue ben kepte in close / secrete many a day
Wherefore I purpose / somwhat of them to say.

Fyrst I entende / to make playne descripcyon
Of her fathers kyngedome the realme of Mercyens
How longe it endured / under his tucyon
Under how many kynges / it had prehemynens
Also of her petygre / the noble excellence
For so many sayntes / of one kyndred certayne
Is harde to be founde / in all the worlde agayne.

Unto this rude werke / myne auctours these shalbe
Fyrst the true legende / and the venerable Bede
Mayster Alfrydus and Wyllyam Maluysburge
Gyrarde / Polycronycon / and other mo in deed
Now gloryous god / graunt me to procede
Blessed byrgyn Werburge / my holy patronesse
Helpe me to endyte / I praye the swete maystresse.

¶ A descripcyon of the realme of Mercyens / of bondes
and commodytes of the same.

The yere of our Sauyoure / by full cumpulacyon
four hundred / nyne & fourty frome his natiuite
Werburge. a. iiii.

As venerable Bede / maketh declaracyon
Duke Hengyst came to this lande in great royalte
With Saxons / Angles / Jutes / thre people myghtye
Desyred by Horthyger / than kynge of Brytons
Came to defende / fro greuous oppressyons.

Also the yeres of our blessed sauyoure
Syxe hundreth foure score and nyne expresse
The Brytons were expelled / so sayth myne auctoure
from Englande to walles / with great wretchydnes
In Englande than ruled / seuen kynges doubteles
Whose names we purpose / to shewe with lycens
But pryncypally / of the kingdome of Mercyens.

The fyrst realme of Saxons / began in Kent
The yere of grace / foure hundreth fyue and fyfty
Where duke Engystus / in honour excellent
With sceptre and crowne / fyrst reygned royally
The seconde was Southsex / sayth the hystory
Wher Adla and Ella / reygned full ryght
Whiche realme endured / but short tyme in myght.

The thyrde was West saxons / famous and myghty
Where fyrst reygned kynge Cerdicus
The yere of our lorde / fyue hundreth one and twenty
Whiche realme by procelle / and power byctoryous
Subdued all other / to hym full memorous
The pryncypall Cytees / of his regalyte
Were in olde season / Wynchester and Salesburge.

The fourth was Essex / where duke Erchenwyn
Fyrst reygned kynge / haurynge domynacyon

By the kynge of Mercelande / brought ofte to ruyne
The chiefe Cytee was Colchester / of his domynyon
Also of east Englande / was the fyfth kyngdome
Where Assa crowned / had fyrst the sufferaynte
Of Northfolke and Southfolke / knowen in certaynte.

The fyrthe was the kyngdome of Merlande
Where Cryda was crowned fyrst by auctoryte
Hauynge nyne hyres / obedyent to his hande
As after shall appere / more euident to be
The seuenth was Northūberlande / vnder Ida & Alle
Whylom dyuyded / in sondry kyngdomes twayne
The chiefe Cytee was yorke / wher y^e kynge dyd reygne.

The realme of Mercyens / by olde antyquyte
As playnly declareth / Polycronycon
Thre hundreth yeres / endured in auctoryte
Under eyghtene kynges / worthy nomynyon
Greatest of gouernaunce of all this regyon
Where Wulfer reygned / a kynge victoryous
Father to saynt Werburge / byrgyn moost gloryous.

The boundes and lorchyppes / of the sayd Mercyens
As shewen dyuers bokes hystoryall
Were large and myghty / and of great prehemynens
Where the sayd kynge reygned by power impervall
This realme to dyscrybe / begyn we shall
At the Cytee of Chester / and the water of Dee
Bytwene Englande and wales / of the west partye

And so transcendynge / by towarde Shrewysbury
By the water of Sabryne / vnto Brystowe

The East see mesureth / the East parte truely
The water of Chamys / the south parte doth she we
Flowynge vnto London / whoso dothe it knowe
The water of Humber was on the north syde
With the water of Mersee / theyr landes to dryde.

Of the foresayd ryuer / and water of Mersee
The kyng of Mercens / taketh his name
As moost sure drydent / to be had in memorye
Mesurynge and metynge / the bondes with great fame
Of Mersee and Northumberlande / kynges of the same
Bitwene cheshyr and lanchshyr theyr kyngdomes certayne
As aunyent Cronycles describen it full playne.

The sayd myghty kyngdome / of Mercens dyd holde
Many noble Cytees / with townes and burghes royall
Whiche Penda optayned / enlarged manyfolde
As Chester / Stafford / Lytchefelde / Couetre memorall
Lyncolne and Huntynghdon / Northampton withall
Leycester and Derby / Cambrydge and Dronforde
Worcester and Brystowe / with other mo & Berforde

Many royall ryuers / were conteyned in the same
With sundry kyndes of fyshes / swete and delycious
It were teduous to shewe / of them the dryers name
In ryuers and in pooles / swymmyng full plentuous
Also forestes / parkes / chases large and beauteous
And all beestes of venery / pleasaunt for a kyng
To cours at lyberte / befound there pasturynge

Also this royall realme / holdeth as we fynde
Habundaunce of fruytes / pleasaunt and profytable

Great plente of cornes / and graynes of euery kynde
With hylles / baleys / pastures / comly and delectable
The soyle and glebe / is set plentuous and comendable
In all pleasaunt propurtes / no part of all this lande
May be compared / to this foresayd Mercelande.

The people of Mercens / the trouthe yf we dare saye
Lordes / barons / knyghtes / with all the comunete
In musture and in batayle / euer the pryce haue they
The kynges grace to serue / moost valyaunt in artylere
In all actes Marcpall / euer hauryng the byctorpe
With herte / mynde and harneys / redy day and nyght
Theyr enemyes to subdue / by power mayne & myght.

If they be well ordred / bnder a sure capytayne
And set to suche busynesse / theyr honour to auance
The triumph they optayne / knowen it is certayne
In Englade and Scotlande / & in the realme of Fraunce
Fewe of them haue couñtred / by manhode & valeaunce
Great nombre of enemyes / with knyghthode & polycy
We meane them moost specyall / in the West party.

Many other commodytes / pleasures and propriytes
This sayd realme / holdeth of olde antyquyte
In royalties and lordshyppes / landes and lybertes
Honourably dylated / in worthyp and polycy
Flouryng in wysedome / honours and chyualre
Clerfied by kynges Offa / moost myghty and excellent
Proued in his actes / by playne experyment

This Offa subdued / in bystory as is founde
The kyng of Westsaxons / Northumberlande & Kent

Droue Brytons to wales / out of this lande
And made a depe dytche / for a sure dyuydent
Bytwene Englande and Wales / & to this day presente
Is called dytche Offa / so that no Bryton
On payne of punysshement / shulde entre this regyon.

Kynge Offa traſſlated / as ſayth Polycronycon
By myghty power / the ſee of Canterbury
Unto Lychefelde chyrche / with famous oblacyon
For euer to contynu / confirmed by auctoryte
Alſo he founded / ſaynt Albans monaſterye
Fyrſt of deuocyon / to Rome gaue Peter pens
Thus royall ſomtyme / was the realme of Mercyens.

¶ A deſcrypcyon of the Geanalogy of ſaynt Merburge
and how ſhe descended of ſoure kynges of this lande / &
of the royall blode of fraunce.

¶ Regnum Merc. ex pte pris.

This noble prynces / the doughter of Syon
The floure of vertu / and byrgyn glorious
Blessed Saynt Merburge / full of deuocyon
Descended by auncetry / and tytle famous
Of ſoure myghty kynges / noble and byctoryous
Reynrynge in this lande / by true ſuccellon
As her lyfe hystoryall / maketh declaracyon.

The yere of our lorde / frome the natyuyte
ſyue hundreth. xiiii. and alſo. iiii. ſcore
When Auſtyn was ſende / frome ſaynt Gregorye
To conuert this regyon / vnto our ſauyoure
The noble kinge Cyda / than regned with honoure

Upon the mercyens / whiche kynge was father
Unto kynge Wybba / and Quadriburge his syster.

This Wybba gate Penda / kynge of mercyens
Whiche Penda subdued / fyue kynges of this regyon
Reygnyng thyrty yere / in worthyp and reuerens
Was grauntfater to Werburge / by lynyall successyon
By his quene Kyneswith / had a noble generacyon
Fyue baleant prynces / Penda and kynge Wulfer /
Kynge Ethelred / saint Marceyl / saint marwalde i fere.

And two holy doughters / blessed and vertuous
Saynt Keneburge / and saynt Keneswyde the byrgyn
Whiche ladies were buryed / full memorous
At peturborowe abbay / and now there lyen in shryne
The sayd kynge Ethelrede / by sufferauce deuyne
Had a pryncce Cochede / whiche after reygned kynge
That translated Werburge / the .x. yere of her buryenge.

Saynt Marwalde specyfied / vncl to saint Werburge
By his quene saint Ermeberge a prynces doughter of het
Gate.iii. holy byrgyns / saint mylred & saint mylburge
Saynt Aylgyde the thyrd / of vertu equypolent
With a sone Mereum / whiche frome the holy sacramēt
Of baptym was taken / by myracle expresse
To the blys of heuen / to reygne there endelesse.

The seconde sone of Penda / we meane kynge Wulfere
A noble balyant pryncce / by lynyall dyscent
Reygnyng vpon the Mercyens with royalte & power
Married saynt Ermenylde / y^e kynges doughter of kent
Where throughe the grace of god omnyppotent

They had fayre yssue / saynt Werburge / saynt Kenrede
Saynt wulfade / saynt Kustyn / in story as we rede.

¶ Regnum Northunborum /
Ex parte matris.

The secōde realme of whō saynt Werburge dyd descēde
Was of saynt Edwyn / kyng of Northumberlande
Whiche maryed Quadryburge / his ryghtes to defende
Doughter of Tryda / kyng of Merlande
Byt were them descended / as we vnderstande
Two comly prynces / the fyrst we call Eadfyde
The secōde sone in batayle slayne was named Offyde

Kyng Eadfyde gate Hereyc y^e was kyng of Deiram
This Hereyc by Beorfwyde his quene fayre & fre
Had saynt Hyde the abbesse / saynt Bede sayth y^e same
Lady also foundresse / of the abbay of Wythbye
This sayd kyng Hereyc / had another lady
The quene of eest Englāde / saynt Heryfwith the byght
Another to saynt Serburge / & thre other ladies byght.

This holy Serburge / full of grace and goodnes
Was maryed to Ercombert / a noble kyng of Kent
Byt wyx them descended / a precyous ryches
The blessyd Ermenylde / humble and pacient
Whiche for her vertue / was maryed full excellent
To Wulfer kyng of Merciens / with great solempnyte
And mother was to Werburge / a swete floure of chastite

¶ Regnum Estanglorum /
ex parte matris.

The thyrd noble kyngedome / of her parentage
Was the realme of east England / whylom i great degre
Cytylus kyng of the same / victoruous and sage
Gat Redwald his fyrst sone / a chrysten prynce was he
This Redwalde had.ii. sones / flouryng in chyualye
The fyrst was Kenulherus / a noble man of fame
The seconde Corpwaldus / called by his name.

This foresayd kyng Cytylus / had a seconde sone
Called Egnicius / accepted as a martyre
Whiche sayd Egnicius / by lynyall progressyon
Had.iii. noble prynces / that worthy euer were
The fyrst was called Ethelwod / y^e seconde Adelhere
The thyrd was saynt Anna / a kyng moost vertuous
In batayle slayne bryghtfully / now a martyr glorio^s

This forsayd kyng Anna / marryed as we rede
The holly prynces Heselwith / for loue and ampte
They had a noble yssue / to encrease theyr mede
The blessed Serburge / saynt Audry of Elpe
Saynt Ethelburge the thyrd / in Byrges now lyeth she
Saynt Althburge the.iiii. y^e martyr saynt Furwyne
And Abdulph after kyng / which regned a lōge tyme.

The lady saynt Serburge / eldest of them all
A gracypus matrone / enduryng all her lyfe
Was marryed to Ercombert / y^e kyng of Kent ropall
They brought fourth a progeny / noble to dyscryue
The blessed Ermenylde / vertuous mayd and wyfe
Whiche lady was mother / by grace of god almyght
Unto blessed Alrburge / our confort and our lyght.

¶ Regnum Cancie et francie / ex parte matris.

The.iiii. myghti kyngdome / of whom this royal pices
Saynt Werburge descended / was the realme of kent
Where reygned fyrst Hengystus / by vycory & prowes
Whiche was the fourth man / by lygnage eydent
Procedynge fro Woden / a prynce full prepotent
Of whom our pgenytours / Angles / Jutes / & Saxons
Lynpally succeded / kynges of dyuers nacyns.

This foresayd prynce Wodē / as dyuers auctours sayne
Was the.xv. frō Noe / by naturall progressyon
Of his eldest sone Sem / descendynge playne
In saxons tongue Geaf / after rpte and custome
Not of the lygne of Japhet / by theyr oppynon
Retourne we to Hengyst / and to his successoures
And speke of theyr royalte / to please the audytoures.

Ermenycus kyng of kent / reygned with great power
The yere of our sauoure / fyue hundreth fyue & thyrte
Unto whome Engystus was great graundfather
This sayd kyng Ermenyc / had yllue fayre and fre
A doughter called Ricula / which : married was to fledde
Of Estler and Aydyller / gouernoure and kyng
Of whom a myghty kynred / by proces was comynge.

This Ermenyc gate Ethelbryt full vertuous
Whiche kyng reygned in kent / the yere of our sauour
fyue hundreth fyue & fyfty / & baptyled was gracous
By blessyd bysshop Austyn / of Englāde called doctour
He was fyrst cysten kyng / & pryncypall protectour
Of the fapth within this lande / and founder was also

Of dyuers holy places / and monasteryes both to w.

**This sayd kyng Ethelbryc / for the great habundaunce
Of ryches and honour / was marryed solemply
To the prynces Berta / the kynges doughter of fraunce
And of them proceded a vertuouse progeny
Cadburg & Ethelburg saintes / whiche Ethelburg truly
By Edwyne kyng of North / had.iiii. prynces honorable
And.iii. holy doughters / gracious and commendable.**

**Also kyng Ethelbryc / had to his successoure
Kyng Cadwalde / in Kent reygnyng a longe space
He marryed lady Emma / of fraunce the chosen floure
And by her had yssue / saynt Engwyde full of grace
Also pryncce Ermened his seconde sone / whiche wace
Marryed to quene Osaua / of them dyd procede
Two holy martyrs / Ethelbryc and Etheldrede.**

**This pryncce Ermened / had.iiii. ladyes bryght
Lyke the.iiii. floodes of Paradyse / chynnyng in vertu
The eldest of the systers / saynt Ermenberge bryght
The seconde saynt Ermenburge / the spouses of Ihesu
The thyrde saynt Adeldryde / all byres dyd subdu
The.iiii. saynt Erme gyde / sayth they lyues hystoryall
Thre of them holy bryggys / the fourth matrone we call**

**This foresayd Cadwalde / a souerayne myghty kyng
By Emma of fraunce / had to his entherytoure
The noble kyng Erccumbert / full gracious in luyng
Whiche marryed Serburge / with worshyp & honour
The kynges doughter of east England specyfyed afore
This pryncce loued vertue / prayer and deuocyon
Merburge**

Commaūdyng all his realme / to kepe y^e fast of Lenton:

Ercombert. xxx. yere / regnyng in his regaly
Had a noble progeny / in grace and all goodnes
His prynce hyght Egbryt / his seconde sone Lothary
Whiche prynce reygned but ten yere / kyng expresse
Lothary succeded hym / raynyng. xii. yeres doubtlesse
Also he had two doughters / saynt Ermenylde y^e quene
The other hyght saynt Erhengode / a moynes serene.

This lady Ermenylde / was maped royally
To the aforesayd Aulfer / kyng of Mercens
Bytwene them descended / full gracously
A noble Margaryte / of hye magnyfyens
A roose of Paradyse / full of prehemynens
Most blessed Werburge / the gemme of holynes
Our synguler suffrage / and sterre of our clerenes.

¶ A descrypcyon of the actes & chyualry of kyng Penda
graundfather to saynt Werburge / & of his noble and
vertuous yssue and progenye. Ca. iiii.

The yere of grace. vi. c. fyre and twenty
The foresayd prynce Penda / began for to reygne
The tenth man frō Woden / a prynce in Saxony
Sone and heyre to Wylbbe / sayth myne auctour playne
Fyfty yeres of aege / that tyme he was certayne
Whan he was fyrst crowned / kyng of Mercens
Chyrt yeres he reygned / with great reuerens.

Fyue kynges in batayle / this Penda dyd subdue
Saintes Edwyn & Oswald / kynges of Northūberlāde

With Sygebert / Egnocius / and Anna full of vertu
Thre noble kynges / regnyng in east Englande
With helpe of Brytones / by Bede we vnderstande
Dylated his regyon / with worthyp and honoures
Moche more than dyd / any of his predecesloures.

He maryed Keneswith / a lady fayre and bryght
And by her had yssue / a goodly generacyon
Peada his prynce / Culfur a noble knyght
Saynt Ethelred / and Aferwalde full of deuocyon
Also saynt Aferfellyn / of holy conuersacyon
Saynt Keneburge / also saynt Keneswyde
Auntes to saynt Werburge / upon the fathers tyde.

Thre of his chyldren / as we vnderstande
Prynce Peada / Kyneburge / and Ethelrede
He maryed with Oswy / Kyng of Northumberlande
Co.iii. of his yssue / for loue and for mede
Culfur and Aferwalde / the story sayth in dede
Were maryed vnto / the royall blode of Kent
To Ermenylde and Domueue / two ladyes excellent.

Soone after by grace / the myddyll parte of Mercens
Under prynce Peada / were baptysed euery chone
Whiche Peada maryed / Elfelede with reuerens
Doughter vnto Oswy / kyng of the North regyon
Penda therto graunted / without contradyccyon
Under a fre lycence / his people were at lyberte
Within all his regyon / baptysed for to be.

Also prynce Alfryde / sone to kyng Oswy
Maryed saynt Keneburge / syster to prynce Peada
Werburge
b.ii.

Whiche sayd Beada / brought from the north party
foure holy preestes / Ced / Beccy / and Adda
To preche to his people / the fourth was Wynna
Whiche.iiii. selden leased / day / nyght nor tyme
To conuert the people / vnto chrystes doctryne.

Kynge Benda consented / as afore is sayd
And permytted doctours / to preche in euery place
Thughout his realme / and neuer it denyed
E baptysed his subgettes / by sayth and ghostly grace
He ayded them with socour / and helpe in that case
That wolde be conuerted / for theyr synful mede
As sayth myne auctour / the venerable Bede.

But by the temptacyon / of our ghostly enemy
This sayd kynge Benda / this byctoryous knyght
Of balaunt men in armure / rayfed a great company
And to the North parties went / purposynge to fyght
And cruelly to flee / by power / mayne / and myght
The foresaid kynge Olwy / as he afore had slayne
Sart Olwalde his brother / kynge and martyr playne.

Shortly was forgotten / the fauour of his affynyte
That fully was cōtracte / bytwene these kynges twayne
Joynd at the maryages / of theyr chyldren the
Euer to haue endured / in loue by reason playne
yet Olwy offered Benda / many ryche gyftes certayne
To auoyde his malyce / and for to kepe the peas
Whiche Benda refused / replete with wychednes.

Bytwene these.ii. kynges / was a strōge myghty batell
Not ferre from yorke / ny the flood of Wynwed

In the regyon of Leedes / where by fortune cruell
Kynge Penda perished / & carefully was leed
And. xxx. dukes with hym / were slayne and leste deed
The kynge Oswy offered gladly / with good entent
His yonge doughter Edelred / to god omnyppotent.

He set her for doctryne / to the abbesse saynt Hylde
Lady of Strengthalt / now called Whytby
And gaue. xii. possessyons / a monastery to buyde
Whiche place is from yorke / myles thyrty
He gaue great landes / to his sone in lawe Peade
But the thyrde yere after / this sayd prynce was slayne
By treason of his wyfe Elleda / for certayne.

¶ Now after dethe of Penda & his sone prynce Peada
his seconde sone Tulfes / father to saynt Werburge was
electe to be kynge of all the Mercyens. Ca.b.

A fter that this Penda / of Mercyens kynge
In batayle by kynge Oswy / cruelly was slayne
And his prynce Peada / after hym thre yeres regnyng
Was put vnto deth / by his quene in certayne
These people of Mercyens / rebelled sore agayne
The foresayd Oswy / kynge of Northumberlande
And hym refused / as ye shall vnderstande.

All the sayd Mercyens / by a generall counsell
fortyfied themselfe / with power myght and reason
And crowned prynce Tulfes / as Bede doth vs tell
with honour / worshyp / and great renoume
Whiche prynce to kynge Penda / was the seconde sone
This prynce was preserued / afore tyme secretly
Werburge b.iii.

And saued by his subiectes / frome dethe and malady.

This balyaunt prynce / and redoubted knyght
Kynge Aulfer thus crowned / with great prosperyte
Upon the Atercyens reigned / by tyle and myght
Whiche realme was dryyded / whylom in partes thre
Fyft in the West marches / & in the South parte truely
The thyrde parte was nomynate / mydle Englonde
Duer them all thre / he reygned as is fonde.

This sayd kynge Aulfer / in honour famous
Was deuoutely baptysed / with great solempnyte
By two holy bysshops / the blessed finanus
And bysshop Jerumannus / saythe the bystoye
The kynge made a bowe / of hye auctoryte
All temples of ydols / within his regyon
To destroy and chaunge / vnto chrysten relygyon.

This Aulfer was polytyke / replete with wysdom
Victoryous in batayle / proued by his chyualry
His enemyes oppressed / by manhode and reason
Subdued his aduersaryes / and had the victory
From his realme expelled / all cruell tyranny
Conquered in batayle / at Ashdum ryght famous
The kynge of West Saxons / called Kenwalcus.

Also he subdued / vnto his Empyre
The Ilande Alecta / called the yle of wyght
And after that he had / of it his desyre
He gaue the sayd yle / by tyle full ryght
To the kynge of eest Englonde / to enlarge his myght
Under that condycyon / that he baptysed wolde be.

And was his godfather / of pure charyte

In lyke wyse as this prouynce / of Mercerys
Whylom was greatest realme / within Englande
Many yeres contynuyng / in prehemynēs
Ryght to the spyrytualte / well known and founde
How true bysshop sees / within this sayd Mercelande
As at Chester / at Lychefelde / also at Worcester
The fourth at Lyncolne / the fyfth at Dorchester.

Forthermore after dethe / of Jerumannus
Bysshop of Lychefelde / Culfer the sayd kyng
Desyred the archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus
To graunt them a bysshop / of holy lyuynge
To gouerne the people / by spyrytuall techynge
To shewe to his subiectes / the ensample of vertu
And to preche and teche / the sayth of Chryst Ihesu.

This holy archebysshop / and prymate Theodorus
Desyred saynt Cedda / of the kyng Oswy
For his perfeccyon / and lyuynge vertuous
To be remooued / to the prouyce of Mery
Kyng Culfer was gladde / of his comynge truly
Ryght so were all / the people of his realme
Thankynge therfore / the kyng of Jerusalem.

Kyng Culfer graunted / to saynt Cedda the cōfessoure
Chan bysshop of Lychefelde / moche possessyon
To edify chyrches / vnto chrystes honoure
But namely he gaue a certayne mansyon
In the prouynce of Lyndesey / ny vnto Lyncolne
Suffreyent to suffyse / and well for to content

fifty seruauntes / of good relygyous obedyent.

This noble sayd prynce / and redoubted souerayne
Flouryng in manheed / wysedome and polycy
Excelled the peres / of this realme certayne
In person / fortytude / and proued chyualry
Lyberall to his seruauntes / gentyll in company
Gracyous to the poore / and a sure protectour
A founder of chyches / and a good benefactour.

CA lytell descrypcyon of the noble maryage bytwene
Kyng Aulfer & saynt Ermenylde y^e kynges daughter
of Kent / & of the solēpnite done at y^e same season. Ca.vi.

In meane whyle the kyng / mynded maryage
By the sufferaunce of our lord god omnyppotent
Issue to encrease / acordynge to his lygnage
After hym to succede / kyng and presydent
He mynded moost / the kynges daughter of Kent
Prynces Ermenylde / nomynate she was
A beautefull creature / replete with great grace.

Certaynly her father / was called Ercomberte
As afore is specyfyed / the kyng of Kent
Her mother Serburge / humble in her herte
Of whome Ermenylde / a lady excellent
Lynpally descended / by tytle full auncyent
Her graundfather / Eobalde kyng Ethelbyctes sone
The fyrst crysten prynce / of Saxons nacyon.

Of foure myghty kyngdomes / she is descended
From the royall blode of fraunce / also of Kent

Upon her fathers party / as afore is notyfyed
And on her mothers syde / by lyne auncient
Frome the east Englande / famous and excellent
Also of Northumberlande / flouryng in honour
Conuerted and baptysed / vnto our sauyour.

This sayd Ermenylde / this floure of vertue
Was euer dysposed / from her natyvyte
Unto the dyscyplyne / of our lorde Ihesu
Enspyrred with his grace / and benygnyte
Refused this worlde / ryches and banyte
He bled the maners / of sadde dysposycon
Passyng fragyll youth / and naturall reason.

Suche synguler confort / of vertuous doctryne
In her so dyd water / a pure perfyte plante
Whiche dayly encreased / by sufferaunce deuyne
Merueylously growyng / in her freshe and barnaunt
With dyuers propyrtes / of grace exuberant
As sobrynes / dyscrecyon / and mekenesse bygynall
Obedyence / graunte / and wysedome naturall.

Euery tree or plante / is proued euident
Whether good or euyl / by experyence full sure
By the budde and fruyte / and pleasaunt descent
As wete tree byngeth forth / by cours of nature
Swete fruyte and delycious / in tast and verdure
Ryght so Ercombert / by his quene moost mylde
Brought graciously forth / the swete Ermenylde.

She folowed her father / in worshyp and honour
As her mother Serburge / she toke mytyacon
Merburge

c.i.

To lyue in clennes / presentynge in behauour
Her father in power / her mother in relygion
Humble in herte / hauynge compassyon
Pyteous and lyberall / where was necessyte
Joyfull to obserue / the dedes of charyte.

Forther of her lyfe / to make declaracyon
As the true legende playnly dothe expresse
Consyder the hystory / with good inspeccyon
Of blessed Serburge / that noble pryncesse
The sayd conuersacyon / and ghosly swetenesse
That is perceyued / in her holy mother
The same perfeccyon / was in the other.

Neuerthelesse Ermenylde / escape ne myght
Worldely honours / and secular dygnyte
As requyred so noble a state of ryght
Ryches / possessyon / namely her beaute
But vnto maryage / compelled was she
Of her parentes / contrary to her entent
To whome she was founde / euer obedyent.

This noble lady / by deuyne prouydens
Elected to her / a spouse commendable
A balyaunt prynce / the kynges sone of Mercyens
Called kynge Gulfer / famous and honorable
Keygnynge in Mercelande / with ioy incomparable
Excellynge many other / prynces of this regyon
In ryches / retynu / fortune / honour / and wysdome

At this maryage / was moche solempnyte
Her father Ercomberte / and her frendes all

Tho prynces her vncles / Egbryct and Lothary
The kynge of east Englande / Aldulph in specyall
Dukes / erles / barons / and knyghtes in generall
Whiche sayd company / were redy that same day
To worshyp the matrymony / in theyr beest aray.

This royall maryage / was solempnyfled
With synghuler pleasures / ryches and royalte
Theyr frendes cosyns / redy on euery syde
To do theyr deuoye / and shewe humanitye
Nothyng wantynge / euery thyng was plente
Of delycate metes / and myghty wynes stronge
With mynstrels / melody / and mythes amonge.

When this fayre prynces / resplendent in vertue
Came vnto Mercelande / in the order of matrymony
Than grace with good gouernaunce / dyd byce subdue
Vertue was maystres / chese ruler and lady
The faythe of holy chyrche / dyd growe and multiply
Relygion encreased / honour and prosperyte
In euery place pacynce / true loue and charyte.

At the solempne spousage / of this lady bryght
Kynge Gulfer promysed / on his fydelyte
Errours to correcke / by his wysdome and myght
Clere to expell / all sectes of ydolatre
Frome his realme / and fulfyll by his auctoryte
The promysse truely made / at the fonte of baptyme
The chyrche to conserue / and saue it from ruyne.

The myghty realme of Mercens / also of Kent
That season were brought / bothe vnto bryte
Merburge c.ii.

And as one kyngedome / ruled full excellent
They subiectes and seruauntes / in tranquyllyte
Kyng Aulfer by his quene / had a noble progenye
Aulfade and Rustyn / with prynce Kenrede
And Werburge / of whome we purpose to procede.

¶ A breue declaracyon of the holy lyfe and conuersacyon
of saynt Werburge / bled in her tender youthe / aboue
the comyn cours of nature. Ca. vii.

This blessed lady / and royall prynces
Descendynge of noble / and hie parentage
Was doughter to Aulfer / the legende dothe rehers
Kyng of Mercelande / and of famous lynage
Her mother Ermenylde / iopned to hym in maryage
They dwelled somtyme / a lytell frome Stone
At a place in Staffordeshyre / amydde his regyon.

They had bytwene them / other chyldren thre
Aulfade and Rustyn / martyrs full glorpyous
Synt Kenrede his prynce / of greate auctoryte
Cumplate at Rome / a confessor gracyous
The lyues of these thre / we wyll not now dyscus
But speke of the ghostly / and meke conuersacyon
Of blessed Werburge / now at this season.

For as declareth / the true Passyonary
A boke wherin / her holy lyfe wyrtten is
Whiche boke remayneth / in Chester monastery
I purpose by helpe / of Ihesu kyng of blys
In any wyse to reherse / any sentence amys

But folowe the legende / and true hystory
After an humble stile / and from it lytell bary.

This blessed Merburge / from her natyurte
Followinge the counseyll / of her noble parentes
Dysposed her selfe / euer to humylyte
Obedient to them / with all reuerens
Loth to dysplease / or make any offens
Or dysquyet any reasonable creature
Thus was her maner / in youthe be ye sure.

Sadde and demure / of her countenaunce
Stable in gesture / proued in euery place
Sobre of her wordes / all vertu to auauunce
Humble / meke / and mylde / replete with grace
Many vertuous maners / in her founde there was
And dyuers gyftes naturall / to her appropriate
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.

And as she encreased / moore and moore in age
A newe plant of goodnes / in her dayly dyd sprynge
Great grace and vertue / were set in her ymage
Wherof her father / had moche merbeylynge
Her mother mused / of this ghosly thyng
To behold so yonge / and tender a may
From vertu to vertu / to procede euery day.

No merueyll it is / who so taketh hede
In naturall thynges / the dyuers operacyon
Dothe not a ropall rose / from a breere procede
Passynge the stocke / with pleasaunt dylectacyon
The swete ryuer passeth / by due probacyon
Merburge c.iii.

His heed and fountayne / ryght so dothe she
Transcende her parentes / with great benygnte.

And tho her bretherne / deltyed for to here
For theyr soule helthe / ghostly exortacyon
yet she them passed / manyfolde more clere
In loue of our lorde / and meke conuersacyon
And lyke as Phebus / in his heuenly regyon
Passed other stretes / thynnyng moost pure
So dothe this byrgyn / aboute the cours of nature.

Lordes / dukes / barons / within the kynges hall
Auerueyled on her maners / and constaunte sobrynes
The plente of wysedome / and dyscrecyon withall
In so tender age / they neuer knewe expresse
Her mynde so perfyte / auoydynge all ylnes
But they knewe well / it pretended by all reasone
Synguler grace and goodnes / to her comynge soone.

Affymyng on this wyse / yf she wolde contynue
With suche vertuous maner / in yeres of hye dyscrecyon
That she sholde do honour / by the grace of Ihesu
Unto all her kynrede / and synguler consolacyon
An ensample of vertu / and humylyacyon
Theyr conforste / theyr tresure / and sterre full bryght
And chefe lumynary / thynnyng day and nyght.

Fyyst in the mornynge / to chyrche she wolde go
folowynge her mother / the quene euery day
With her boke and bedes / and departe not them fro
Here all deuynne serupce / and her deuocyns say
And to our blessed sauour / mekely on knees pray

Dayly hym desyringe / for his endeles grace and pyte
To kepe her frome synne / and preferue her in chastyte.

Where yowthe is dysposed / of naturall mocyon
To dysportes and pleasures / full of banyte
This mayde was euer / of sadde dyspolycyon
Constaunt and dyscrete / still and womanle
Gladde in her soule / to here speke of chastyte
Clenues and sobrenes / and ioyfull for to here
Ghossly exortacyons / to her herte moost dere.

¶ How this yonge byrgyn saynt Uerburge was desy-
red of dukes & erles in maryage / and of the answere she
gaue to the / in auoydng worldly pleasures. Ca.viii.

As tender yowthe passed / this blessed maydyn
Dayly encreased / more and more in vertue
In ghossly science / and vertuous dyscyplyne
Oblerynge the doctryne / of our lorde Ihesu
Had his commaundementes / in her herte full tru
So that no creature / more persyte myght be
In vertuous gyftes (by grace) than she.

She was replete / with gyftes naturall
Her bylage moost pleasaunt / saye and ampyable
Her goodly eyes / clerer than the crystall
Her countenaunce comly / swete and commendable
Her herte lyberall / her gesture sauourable
She lytell consyderynge / these gyftes transytory
Set her selycyte / in chryst perpetually

She hadde moche worshyp / welthe / and ryches
Uerburge c.iiii.

Cleasures / honoures / reuerence and royalte
The ryches she dysposed / with great mekenesse
To the poore people / with great charyte
But her sadnes / constaunce / and humylte
Vertue / gentylnes / so pacyent and colde
Transcended all these other / a thousande folde.

The vertuous maners / and excellent fame
Of this holy byrgyn / redoubted so ferre
In all this regyon / in praytynge her name
That the nobles of this lande / wolde not dysferre
But with ryche apparell / and myghty power
Came for to seke her / lyke as to Salomon
Quene Saba approached / to here of his wysedome.

So lykewyle some came / to her of her vertue
Some of her sadnesse / and prudent dyscrecyon
Some for her constaunce / so stable and true
Some of her chastyte / and pregaunt reason
Some for her beaute / and famous wysdome
And some that were borne / of kynges lygnage
Desyred yf they myght / haue her in maryage.

In beaute amiable / she was equall to Rachell
Comparable to Sara / in fyrme fydelyte
In sadnes and wysedom / lyke to Abygaell
Replete as Delbora / with grace of prophcy
Equyualent to Ruth / she was in humylte
In pulchrytude Rebecca / lyke Hester in solynesse
Lyke Iudyth in vertue / and proued holynesse.

The prynce of Messarons / a pere of this lande

Wyllynge to haue her by way of maryage
With humble reuerence / as we vnderstande
Sayd to her these wordes / wysely and sage
O souerayne lady / borne of hye lynage
O beautefull creature / and imperyll prynces
This is my full mynde / that I now rehers.

From my fathers realme / hyder I am come
Unto our presence / yf ye be so content
With worshyp and honour / and moche renowne
In all honest maner / aperyng euydent
My mynde is on you set / with loue feruent
To haue you in maryage / all other to forsake
If it be your pleasure / thus me for to take.

ye shalbe asured / a quene for to be
ye shall haue ryches / worshyp / and honour
Royall ryche appareyll / and eke the sufferaynte
Precyous stones in golde / worthy a kynges tresour
Landes / rentes / and lybertees / all at your pleasur
Seruauntes euery houre / your byddynge for to do
With ladyes in your chambre / to wayte on you also.

With these kynde wordes / the byrgyn abashed sore
And with mylde countenaunce / answered hym agayne
The playnes of her mynde / to rest for euermore
Sayenge : o noble prynce / I thanke you now certayne
For youre gentyll offer / shewed to me so playne
ye be well worthy / for your regalyte
To haue a better maryage / an hundreth folde than me.

But now I shewe you / playnly my true mynde

My purpose was neuer / marped for to be
A lorde I haue chosen / redemer of mankynde
Ihesu the seconde persone in trynyte
To be my spouse / to Whome my byrgynye
I haue depely bowed / enduryng all my lyfe
His seruaunt to be / true spouses and wyfe.

Therefore noble prynce / hertfully I you pray
Tempte me no forther / after suche condycyon
Whiche am so stedfast / and wyl be nyght and day
Neuer for to chaunge / nor make alteracyon
Take ye this answer / for a sure conclusyon
The promyse I haue made / and vowe of chastyte
Enduryng my lyfe / shall neuer broken be.

Dyuers other astaters / came her for to assaile
Made instaunt requestes / vnto this byrgyn fre
For all theyr busynesse / they myght not preuaile
So constaunt fyne & stable / in herte & mynde was she
A mountayne or hyll / soner leue ye me
Myght be remoewed / agaynst the course of nature
Than she for to graunte / to suche worldly pleasure.

She well consydered / the texte of holy scrypture
Who byleueth her chaste / for the loue of Ihesu
The temple of god / they be clypped sure
And shalbe rewarded / for that noble vertu
An hundreth folde (by grace) byces to subdu
And heuen for to haue / at theyr departyng
Whiche she remembred wysely / aboue all thyng.

¶ How y^e false Werhode desyred kynge Gulfer to haue

Merburge his doughter in maryage. And how y^r kynge
graunted therto. Ca. ix.

As afore is sayd / whan Penda the kynge
By saynt Oswy kynge / at Leedes was slayne
And Aulfer his sone / the fourth yere folowynge
Was baptyfed and crowned / By bysshop Hyname
A solempne boue he made / faythfull and certayne
All temples of ydolles / in his realme to destroy
And chaunge them to chyrches / and newe edify.

The same he promysed / as he was true knyght
Whan that he maryed / blessed Ermenylde
Pedyngge sore the iustyce / of god almyght
For his fathers demerytes / unreconsyded
On hym to fall sodeynly / and so be begyled
Promysynge amendes / at his conuersyon
Unto holy chyrche / with humble deuocyon.

Whiche kynge Aulfer / as was the more pyte
By the wycked counseyll / of a fals knyght
Called Merbode / ranne soone in apostasy
For a lytell whyle / wantynge perfyte lyght
The bryghtnes of the day / was tourned to nyght
Whan he gaue credence / that creature vnto
Prolongynge the actes / he promysed to do.

Under kynge Aulfer / chese stewart of his hall
Was this false Merbode / ruler of euery porte
Whome the lady Aenus / brought vnto thall
Perfed and wounded / so greuoufly his harte
Enflammed with loue / and with her fyry darte

Plonget with sorowe / syghynge day and nyght
The beaute of Werburge / moeued so his syght.

The blynde goddes Cuppe / bered so sore his mynde
With interye loue / and sensuall desyre
Of worldely affectyon / that rest coude he none fynde
His spyryte was troubled / he brenned as dothe the fyre
Upon this holy byrgyn / his loue was so entyre
To haue her in maryage / was all his intent
That euery houre was a moneth / after his iudgement.

Prouyded in his mynde / how that he well myght
Enforce hym wysely / with boldynesse and polycye
To shewe his full entent / in maner good and ryght
No dyspleasure taken / vpon his lordes partye
By this ymagynacyon / he fell vpon his knee
Afore his lorde and kynge / desyrynge a petcyon
His mynde to declare / with fully grace of pardon.

Excellent prynce he sayd / and moost worthy kynge
That reygnes now within the realme of Englande
Flouryng in chualry / in honour encreasyng
Trāscendynge other prynces / of this forsayd lande
My full intencion / now ye shall vnderstande
Requyrynge your grace / in this poore cȳcumstaunce
At my petcyon / to take no greuaunce.

My synguler good lorde / hertfully I you pray
With instaunte request / and humble supplicacyon
Graunte me your doughter Werburge / as ye maye
To haue her in maryage / auoydynge all treason
If your grace deny / this present petcyon

Gethe me behoues / full soone and hastely
My loue is so feruent / there is no remedy.

Stande by Werbode / kynge Gulfer than sayd
Our chyfe champpon / in all our chyualry
your humble desyre / shall not be denyd
Of Werburge our doughter / now consent wyll we
If ye may optayne / her wyll and mynde truele
Her mothers also / vnder that condycyon
We graunt her to you / at your meke suggestyon.

Of this gracyous answere / a gladd man he was
Reioysynge in his herte / began to conspyre
Castynge in his mynde / craftely by compas
How he myght optayne / to the hye empyre
And reygne after Gulfer / at his owne desyre
But tho man prepose / god dysposed all
Who clymbeth to hye / often hath a fall.

¶ How the quene saynt Ermenylde wolde not cōsente
thereto / & how her bretherne saynt Wulfade and Ruffyn
were agaynst the sayd maryage. Ca. x.

Of this busynesse / whan the quene had knowlege
Namely of Werbode / the greuous presumption
How he had moeued / throught his wyched rage
The kynge in suche causes / by synghuler petcyon
And how the kynge consented / to his supplicacyon
She was sore greued / at this proude crafty knyght
Called hym in presence / and sayd these wordes ryght.

Thou wyched tyraunt / and vnkynde creature

folowynge thyne appetyte / and sensuallite
Thou cruell pagane / presumynge at thy pleasure
Bynded with ygnorance / and infydelyte
Who gaue the lycence / and suche auctoryte
Our doughter Werburge / to desyre of the kynge
Without our counseyll / therto consentynge.

Consyder ryght well / thy kynred and pedegre
It is well knowen / thou arte comen of nought
Nothor of duke / erle / lorde / by auncetre
But of bylayne people / yf it be well sought
Agaynst our honour / now that thou haste wrought
Whiche consequently / shall be to thy payne
For all thy labour / is spende in bayne.

Thou knowes of a certayne / refused the hase
Many a ryche maryage / within this londe
A thousande tymes better / than euer thou wase
Is now orels shalbe / by any maner fonde
Our doughter to the / shall neuer be bonde
Nor suche a captyfe / shall haue no powere
With kynges blode royall / to approche it nere.

Under my souerayne lorde / and me also
An offycer thou arte / and of great royalte
To be a true seruaunte / now thou arte our foo
Tried / proued / founde fals / in eche degre
Thou haste well deserued / to be hanged on a tre
For thy mysdede / thou shall soone repent
Thy hye presumpcyon / proude and dysobedient.

As for our doughter / and dere derlynge

By the grace of god / and our aduysment
Soone shalbe marped / to the moost myghty kyng
That euer was borne / and in this erth lent
We meane our saupour / lorde omnypotent
Wherefore thy wretchydnes / wyll vpon the lycht
Thou taynted traytour / out of our lycht.

With that saynt Werburge / came into presence
Afore her mother / and all the company
Doyng her duty / with all due reuerenc
Folowynge her doctryne / full sappently
With lycence obtayned / spake euidently
After suche maner / that all the audyence
Reioysed to here / her lusty eloquence

O souerayne lady / and kynges doughter dere
My dere mother / ouer all thyng transytory
O gracious prynces / and quene to kyng Mulfere
To your ghosly counseyll / do me euer apply
As I haue promysed / ryght euidently
To the kyng of kynges / and lorde celestyall
I wyll obserue / enduryng this lyfe mortall.

And thou false Werhode / folowynge sensuallite
I meruaile greatly / thy hye presumpcyon
To moeue our father / with suche audacyte
Knowynge my mynde / set on relygyon
yet for thy soule helthe / accepte this lesson
Aske mercy and grace / of my spouse eternall
Lest vengeance sodeynly / vpon the do fall.

Wherwith her bretherne / Mulfader and Rustyn

Two noble prynces / manfull sadde and wyse
Sore bered with payne / they hertes were within
At this false stwarde / whiche can so deuyse
Agayne they honour / to do suche preiudyse
As to attempte they father the kyng
In so great a mater / they not consentynge.

They called Murtherer / afore them all
Sayenge thou cartyfe / who gaue the lycence
To moue this cause / so hy and specyall
Touchynge a lady / of suche prehemynence
A kynges doughter / of moche magnyfyence
None comparable to hym / in all this regyon
In honour / royalte / power / and dyscrecyon.

And as our mother sayd / to the byfore
Loke well thy progeny / and all thy lynage
A byllayne orels wers / sothly / thou was bozne
Now our dere syster / wolde haue in maryage
As semynge for a prync / of hys parentage
Than for suche a carle / by a prouerbe auncient
A lad to wedde a lady / is an inconuenient.

Therefore we charge the / vpon greuous payne
Knowe no suche mater / nor speke of it no more
For yf suche mocyon / come to vs agayne
Of hys presumpcyon / as is done afore
Thou shalt repent / the cause and dede full sore
Now we commaunde the / no farther to contryeue
But cease of suche busynesse / in payne of thy lyue.

¶ How the false Murtherer complayned vpon Murtherer

and fuffyn to kynge Aulfare by malyce and enuy / and
was the cause of theyr dethe. Ca. xi.

This wycked Werrebode / the bedyll of Belpall
The minifter of myfchef / a fergeant of fathanas
Confyderynge he was / despyled of them all
And foze rebuked / for his outragvous trespas
He breened in enuy / as a man without grace
Cast in his mynde / how he myght wroken be
Upon her betherne / by fome fubtylte.

Euer from that tyme / he lay in wayte
Seking occalyons / on them to complayne
Dayly ymagyned / with fubtyll deceyte
Them to fubdue / and caufe to be flayne
Attendyng oportunte / to take them in a trayne
By the false entylement / of his mayfter Belpall
Prompte to all myfchefe / as dyfsciple naturall.

In fauour of his prynce / by crafte he hym brought
(As now is in cufstome) with false flattery
Some please theyr mayfter / and that is ryght nought
So dyd this Werrebode / by fubtyll polycy
His bengeable mynde / was hymfelfe to magnify
And utterly to lofe / thefe prynces twayne
Or deftroie hymfelfe / by myffortune playne.

Lyke as Archythofell / chefe counfelour to abfalon
Sundry tymes moeued hym / vnto baryaunce
And with kynge Affuerus / in fauour was Amon
Counfelynge hym euer / vnto great myfchaunce
In lyke caufe Werrebode / moeued to bengeaunce
Werburge. d.i.

Was chefe counſeler / to Aulſer the kyng
Whiche brought hym ſelfe to ſhame / and euyll endyng.

The elder prynce Aulfade / in his dyſporte
Uſed hawkynge / huntynge / for a paſt tyme
But vnto huntynge namely / was his reſorte
Euery day in the morowe / longe afore pryne
And as it fortunied / vpon a tyme
A myghty harte reſed was / courſed a longe ſpace
Whome Aulfade purſued / with pleaſure and ſolace.

This harte ſore ſtrayned / ranne for his ſocour
As all deer done / of theyr propyete
To a well with water / after his great labour
Hym to reconforte / and the more freſher be
Wherby ſaynt Cead / had his oratorye
The wylde harte there lay / full ſecrete and ſtyll
And ſuffered this holy man / to do all his wyll.

This bleſſed byſſhop moeued with pyte
Couered this ſayd harte / with bowes and leues alſo
Put a ſmall corde / aboute his necke trule
And after commaunded hym ſpedly to go
To the wylde woodes / whens he came fro.
His paſture to ſeke / for ſaynt Cead knewe truly
It was a ſygne folowynge / of ſome great myſery.

(As Bede wytnelleth) this holy confeſſour
Was byſſhop of Lychefelde / and Couentre
Whiche for the loue of our ſauour
In wylderneſſe dwelled / all ſolitarye
Contented with fruytes / of the wylde tree

With rootes / herbes / water / for his sustentacyon
Endurynge penauce / with due contemplacyon.

This venerable pynce / ensuyng this great harte
Approched to his cell / with great dylgence
Tenderly requyrng / where and in what parte
This harte escaped / so ferre out of presence
This holy man answered / with all reuerence
Beestes / byrdes / fowles / I kepe none at all
But I knowe the instructour / of thy helthe eternall.

By this brute beest / thou shall perceyue well
The sacramentes of holy chyrche euerychone
To encrese thy beleue / by our ghostly counsell
And so to be baptyfed / and haue remysyon
By dyuers brute beestes / for mannes saluacyon
Our lord hath shewed / secretes mystryall
To his electe persones / by grace supernall.

To Noe came conforste / after the great deluge
By a doue / byngynge a braunche of Olyue
To the prophet Hely / a rauens dyd refuge
Brought hym his sustenance / and saued his lyue
Unto saynt Eustach / full memoratyue
Our lord appered / in a hartes lykenes
To whome he obeyed / gladly with mekenes.

Of whiche examples / pynce Aulsade gladd was
Thankynge god and saynt Cead / that he thyder come
And sayd holy father / fulfylled with grace
If ye can supply / my instaunte petycyon
That the sayd harte / myght retourne hyder soone
Werburge. d.ii.

Whiche is now in wyldernesle / bnto our presence
Than to your doctryne / I will gyue fully credence.

Saynt Cead bnto prayer / deuoutely went
And the wyld harte / frome the wood came hastely
With the corde in his necke / apperynge euydent
And in theyr presence / stode full ryght soberly
My sone than he sayd / byleue than stedfastly
Understande ye may / all thyngge possyble is
To a saythfull persone / that perfyteley bpleuys.

Gulfade confortd / and in the sayth probate
Fell downe to his fete / with humble deuocyon
Desyrynge baptym / to be regenerate
Unto our saupour / for his soules saluacyon
Saynt Cead blessed / the well that season
And baptysed this prynce / in name of the trynryte
Was preest and godfather / for want of compayne.

This chrysten prynce / tarped with hym all nyght
In fastyng / prayer / and medytacyon
And was refreshed / naturally in syght
With bodyly and ghostly sustentacyon
The next day receyued / the holy comunion
With lycence departed / to his father agayne
The harte to the forest / recourfed certayne.

The thynde day after / his brother Ruffyn
Followinge the same harte / by deuyne prouydence
Was well instructed / in ghostly doctryne
Baptysed by saynt Cead / & communed with reuerence
And as it fortunyd / by playne experyence

Of all the proces done / to the elder brother
All thyng dyd happe / ryght so to the other.

Afore this season / chrystes sayth moost gracyous
Thurgh this lande / was preched in euey place
By bysshop fynane / and Jerumannus
Whiche Jeruman of eest Englande / fyrst bysshop was
And with saynt Ermenylde / came hyder by grace
yet fully conuerted / was not Mersee regyon
Clene frome ydolatry / vnto this season.

These forsayd prynces / conuerted newly
By blessed Cead / to chrysten relygyon
Dayly to hym resorted / for counseyll ghostly
To encrease in vertue / and holy perfeccyon
With lycence pretended / they wolde togyder come
Vnto his oratory / from the kynges hall
Under colour of Huntynge / as they dyd it call.

And as it is wryten / in holy scrypture
Whoso is a sure frende / loueth stedfastly
And who is enemy / putteth dyligent cure
At yschefe to accomplishe / moost studyously
The false Merabode suspectynge / euidently
The newe conuersyon / of these prynces twayne
Prepared hym craftely / to take them in a trayne.

He watched on them / secretly euery day
To knowe theyr resorte / and vnto what place
Lyke as a hounde folowynge / these prynces to bytray
Or a dogge dothe a dere / by sent of the chas
Whan he had perceyued / how all thyng was.

He compased in mynde / by false inuencion
To complayne to the kynge / for theyr destruccyon.

My synguler goode lord / and moost pryncypall
Sayd this Wlerebode / the fals traytour
Pleaseth your goodnes / and grace specyall
To my supplicacyon / to be a protectour
Ye haue two prynces / myghty in honour
Whiche are my lordes / and euer shalbe
If they wolde be true / to your soueraynte

They haue refused / the more pyte is
your auncyent lawes / and sectes euerychone
And with your lycence / haue done yet more amys
For now they be subiecte / to a newe relygion
Utterly refusynge / your decrees and olde custome
Folowynge the counseyll / and mynde of a senvoyr
Called byllhop Cead / theyr specyall auctor.

your strayte commaundementes / they dayly despyce
And purpose I tell you / in secretenes
Unto your persone / to do moche preiudyce
To murther or poyson you / shortly doubtles
And so for to reygne / and gouerne your ryches
Bytwene them twayne / to duryde your lande
By fals conspyracy / as ye shall vnderstande.

With these false tales / and many other mo
The kynge was moeued / to malyce and yre
By his compleccyon / as he was wont to do
More cruell than a beest / as feruent as the fyre
Depely affyrmyng / that dethe shulde be theyr hyre

If he myght take them / in any place
They shulde be slayne / and suffer withouten grace.

In the morow after / whan Phebus began to clere
The kynge toke Merbode / with hym secretly
To try out the truthe / and how it wolde appere
Whether his prynces / were gone to the oratory
If it were so / he sende hym pryuely
To gyue them knowlege / of his entent
For to remoeue / from his hasty Judgment.

The father had pyte / vpon his chyldren naturall
Wolde not haue slayne them / the sothe to say
Wherefore he sende / the seruauit of Belyall
To conuay them fro thens / some other way
The kynge knewe hymselfe / not able that day
To refrayne his yre / and cruell hastynesse
Gyuen to hym of nature / in suche great dystresse.

This wycked Merbode / came to the oratory
And saue these prynces / in great deuocyon
Councepled his message / by malyce and enury
Retourned to the kynge / hastily and soone
Newly complaynyng / by fals ymagynacyon
A hundreth folde worse / than at the fyrst tyme
With new addycyons / to bryng them to ruyne.

And whan the kynge / approached nigh the cell
Herynge the complayntes / of this fals knyght
The chyldren perceyued / a boyce ryght well
Celled of theyr prayers / and came forth full ryght
On whome whan Aulfere / had ones a syght

He was sore moeued / as hote as the fyre
Agaynst her chyldren / that loued hym entyre.

But by the malyce / and wycked temptacyon
Of the deuyll / mannes olde mortall enemy
And what by the false crafty suggestyon
Of Wycked Wlerebode / fulfylled with enuy
And by his owne hastynesse / and cruell fury
These pynces were slayne / Gulsade and Ruffyn
Now glorious martyrs / repprynge in heuyn.

After whan kynge Gulfer / approched his castell
And bnneth was entred / into his hall
Incontynently a spyryte / the false fende of hell
Entred fals Wlerebode / after the people all
Inwardly hym bered / with peynes continuall
That his armes and handes / he dyd horribly tere
Whiche todayne vengeaunce / all the courte dyd fere.

He rored and pelled / lyke a wylde bull
Shewed all the myschefe / malyce and enuy
Done agaynst the martyrs / with a mynde yrefull
So sore constrayned / with peynes greuously
The deuyll ceased not / his dolours to multiply
Tyll his fylthy soule / compelled sore was
For to expyre / for his hydeous trespass.

¶ How kynge Gulfer was conuerted & toke great re-
pentaunce for his offences. And by the counsell of saynt
Ceade was a deuoute man / and a good benefactour to
holy chyrche / and a founder of dyuers holy places rely-
gious.

Ca.xii.

Than Culfer consyderynge / with due dyscrecyon
His cruell hastynes / and furpous mynde
How ferre he had / abused his reason
Agaynst his chyldren / by nature and kynde
He sore repented / in hystory as we fynde
His greuous trespass / and homycyde vnnaturall
In consyence greued / for his synnes mortall.

Samely lamentynge / in soule his apostasy
After his baptyme / and ghostly conuersion
And for the departure / of his prynces truly
Contrary to ryght / kynde and all reason
The losse of his fame / through this regyon
A dethe to his quene / and his louers all
Greuous to his kynnesmen / and frendes naturall.

All these consydered / with due cyrcumstaunce
He wayled and weped / sobbynge full sore
Plonged in sorowe / heuynes / and greuaunce
Lamentynge his offence / a thousande tymes therfore
His intollerable payne / encreased more and more
Mofully he went / to his bed by and by
Supposynge some dethe / withouten any remedy.

Some of his louers / beyng there present
Gaue hym theyr counseyll / to hunte in the forest
Some to dysportes / and pleasures euident
Some vnto melody / all thoughtes to degest
But Ermenylde his quene / whiche loued hym best
Counseyled hym truly / to take contrycyon
And mendes make / by due satysfaccyon.

Of this ghosly counseyll / the kyng was very glad
And in the morowe after / prepared besyly
With mekenesse to seke / blessed saynt Cead
So whan the kyng came / to his oratory
The bysshop was at masse / and ryght consequently
fro heuen descended / so glorious a lyght
That of the mystery / Culfer had no lyght.

Whan masse was ended / saynt Cead his vestures caste
Upon the sonne beame / by myracle there hangynge
Supposynge on a forme / and made moche haste
To mete at the doore / mekely the sayd kyng
Whiche laye there prostrate / penaunce desyrnge
With reuerence hym eleuate / and gaue an exortacyon
The kyng was agreable / for to do satysfaccyon.

The bysshop hym enioyned / in parte of penaunce
To destroye all ydolles / and sectes of ydolatry
In all his realme / and the temples of paganes
To translate to the honour / of god almyghty
With preestes and clerkes / to pray and synge deuoutly
Also peas and iustyce / to be kepte contynuall
With the werkes of mercy / to be vsed in specyall.

Forther he enioyned hym / of his charyte
Monasteryes to make / of great perfeccyon
Endowed with landes / possessed in lyberte
Therin for to set / men of relygyon
To pray to our lord / for his saluacyon
Whiche Culfer promysed / to fulfill gladly
As soone as he myght / by possybylyte.

Then the foresayd kynge / and the holy confessor
Went to theyr prayers / in the oratory
And as the kynge looked up / to our sauour
The sayd sacrat vestures / he sawe evidently
Hangynge on the sonne beame / full merueylously
His gloues / his gyrdell / the kynge had vpon
Whiche shortly to grounde / falled adowne.

Wherby he perceyued / the great holynesse
Of blessed saynt Cead / and interyor deuocyon
Desyred his prayer / dayly with mekenesse
To almyghty god / for his remysyon
Frome thens departed / with his benedyccyon
Joyfull in his soule / towarde his place
Thankynge god mekely / of his great grace.

As the kynge promysed / to our sauour
Shortly he auoyded / all ydolatry
Brenned theyr ydolles / corrected theyr errour
Translated theyr temples / vnto god almyghty
founded monasteryes / of relyggon many
Of men and women / gaue them possessyons
Landes / rentes / ryches / to encrease deuocyon

Namely he founded / a ryche monastery
for dethe of the prynces / in satysfaccyon
To the honour of god / and saynt Peter truly
Called Peterborowe abbay / in all this regyon
Endowed it with rentes / lybertes / possessyon
A place where many / relygious persones be
Seruyng day and nyght / our lord with charyte.

Warburge.

e.ii.

Also there was founded / at Stone a pyore
In the honour of god / and the martyrs twayne
Possessed with landes / rentes and lyberte
Where deuoute chanons / ben inhabyte certayne
Miracles and sygnes / haue ben shewed there playne
To the laude and prayse / of god omnyppotent
And of these holy martyrs / patrones there present.

¶ Of the feruent desyre & great deuocyon y^e saynt Wer-
burge hadde to be relygious / & of y^e dayly supplicacyōs
she made to the kynge her father for the same. Ca. xiii.

As this myghty prynces / encreased in age
So dayly encreased / her good condycyons
That greatly enioyed / her honorable lynage
Consyderynge in her / suche vertuous dysposcyons
In bygyls / prayers / and ghostly medytacyons
Set all her mynde / power / myght / and mayne
To serue our saupour / day and nyght certayne.

She well consydered / with due dyscrecyon
Of this present lyfe / the great wretchydnesse
How dredefull it is / full of varyacyon
Deceuable / peryllous / and of no sykernesle
The tyme vncertayne / to be knowen doubtlesse
For here is no cytee / nor sure dwellynge place
All thyng is transytory / in short proces and space.

Wherefore this byrgyn / gladd and benyuolent
Folowynge the counseyl / of blessed Mathewe
Was on of fyue byrgens / euer redy present
Had her lampe replete / with oyle full of vertue

Redy for to mete / her spouse swete Ihesu
With charytable werkes / in her soule contynuall
Therefore she was taken / to his blys eternall.

She well consydered / the wordes of the gospell
Who refuses pleasures / and naturall generacyon
for the loue of Ihesu / rewarded shalbe well
With a hundreth folde grace / here for theyr guerdon
And after this lyfe / haue eterne fruytyon
Whiche she remembred / and euer fro that day
On her father wolde call / and mekely to hym say.

Reuerent myghty prynce / and lorde hono:able
Moost dere blyoued father / my synguler helpe & socour
My trust / tresure / and solace / to me moost ampyable
Instauntly I beseeche you / for loue of our sauoure
And of his mother mary / of byrgens the floure
With all the company / that in heuen be
My humble petrycyon / now graunt it vnto me.

Well blyoued father / this is my fully mynde
My instaunte desyre / and humble supplicacyon
By the grace of god / maker of all mankynde
And by your lyfence / helpe / and turycyon
I purpose to enter / into holy relygyon
And utterly refuse / all pleasures transytory
To be professed / at the house of Elv.

O my dere doughter / sayd this noble kynge
My pleasure / solace / and hope of my gladnesse
Moost dere blyoued / and my synguler swete derlynge
I well consyder / your vertue and sadnesse
Werburge. e.iii.

your instaunt request / and humble gentylnesse
And of your desyre / inwardly I am gladde
But yet your motyon / makes my herte full sadde.

All my ioye and conforste / now resteth in the
Syth thy dere bretherne / from vs ben agone
Thou arte the trusty treasure / to thy mother and me
Our synguler solace / and sure consolacyon
Wherfore swete derlynge / as for my heyre alone
I wolde the mary / and a quene the make
If thou wyll consent / and my counseyll take.

Consyder and beholde / thurgh all this lande
Take the a maryage / at thyne owne pleasure
A prynce moost balyaunt / moost noble to be founde
And of helpe and ayde / I shall the assure
With ryches / royalte / welthe / and tresure
Clothes of golde / and royall ryche apparell
And all thynges necessary / as man can of tell.

Remembre also / how after course of kynde
Aege dothe sore greue / thy moder and me also
Therfore naturall loue (swete chylde) dothe me bynde
To gyue the best counseyll / what thou shall do
To honour and worshyp / how thou may come to
Whiche great renoune / and hie estate certayne
To se the a quene / wyll make vs ponge agayne.

God ordeyned matrymony / fyrst in Paradyse
Bytwene man & woman / whan he the worlde dyd make
That mankynde myght encrese / multiply and ryle
Eche persone at pleasure / a spouse for them to take

Now ioynd by holy chyrche / all other to forsake
The chyld of the father / to take his dyscyplene
And after that to teche / his ysue theyr doctryne.

Also man and beest / haue dysposycyon naturall
To brynge forth theyr lykenesse / by generacyon
But man haungeth reason / and fre wyll with all
As lawe requyrez / hath his procreacyon
Under true matrymony / by his owne eleccyon
Or els to obserue / and lyue in pure byrgnyte
For the greater meryte / and rewarde of glorie.

And yf all maydens / shulde kepe theyr chastyte
As ye now do / how shulde the worlde encrese
Swete louely creature / ryght ioyfull wolde I be
To kysse a chyld of thyne / haungeth thy lykenesse
And se the also coronate / as a myghty pryncesse
Enclynne dere derlyng / thy mynde to myne entent
And all these sayd honours / wyll folowe consequent.

C Of the meke answer saynt Werburge gaue to her fa-
ther whan she was mooued to maryage. Ca.xiiii.

The holi mayd / whā she knewe her fathers mynde
Her soule was replete / with woo & penyuenesse
And sore began to wepe / after cours of kynde
The salte teeres dystylled / for payne and heuynesse
By her ruddy chekes shynynge / full saye doubtelesse
Piteous to beholde / but whan the foresayd mayde
Ceased of her sorowe / thus to hym she sayde.

Most beest belyoued father / nexte to god almyght
Werburge. e.iiii.

your kynde gentyll mocyon / wolde moeue inwardely
The mynde of any creature / to folowe you ryght
Or any stony stomake / to relent and apply
And resolute eche harde herte / to waylynge dolefully
Consyderynge on euery parte / with good dyscrecyon
To accepte or refuse / this harde eleccyon.

Father I haue ben to you / meke and obedyent
Euer syth I had / yerres of dyscrecyon
Gladde to obserue / your hye commaundment
With loue interyor / and humble intencion
And so wyll contynue / with lowly submyssyon
In this present lyfe / whyle I do endure
Of my loue and prayer / euer ye shalbe sure.

But moost louely father / I pray you hertfully
Take no dyspleasure / pardon what I shall say
My soule / my herte / and mynde / is set stydfastly
To serue my lord god / nyght and also day
Neuer to be maryed / by no maner of way
For sothly I haue bowed / my true byrgynyte
Unto Ihesu / the seconde persone in trynityte.

That is my spouse / and blessed sauour
For whose loue refused / in certaynte haue I
All worldely pleasures / welth / ryches and honour
With all boorde busynesse / and cures transytory
My loue on hym is sette / so sure and feruently
That nothyng shall separate / my hert hym fro
Sekeness nor helthe / pleasure / peyne / ne wo.

Also my full entent / was neuer otherwyse

¶ Than to be handmayde / to my lord Ihesu
And of my soule and body / to make hym sacryfyce
for my ghosly welthe / all byces to subdue
He is my dere spouse / solace / helthe moost true
On hym is all my herte / and hase ben set alway
And euer shalbe / vnto my endynge day.

¶ In this wretched worlde / we can not longe endure
And of this present lyfe / we are in no suerte
As we haue deserued / so we shalbe sure
After this pylgrymage / rewarded for to be
for mercy and grace / therfore mekely call we
Whyle we haue tyme and space / for than it is to late
When dethe with his darte / sayth to us chekemate.

¶ Therfore dere father / I shewe you now agayne
All my hole herte / desyre and entent
Whiche euer hath ben / and so shalbe certayne
for to be relygyous / chaste / and obedyent
Namely at Ely / for theyr vertue excellent
father I requyre you / for chrystes loue and charyte
My meke supplicacyon / now graunte it vnto me.

¶ The kynge well consydered / his doughters desyre
Her constaunte true mynde / and pure deuocyon
Graunted her petycyon / with synguler loue entyre
Trustynge by her prayer / and dayly supplicacyon
Vnto heuen blysse / the rather for to come
Her mother Ermenylde / was gladd of this tydynge
And lauded full lowly / our lord and heuen kynge.

¶ How saynt Werburge was made a moyne after her

desyre at the monastery of Ely vnder saynt Audy/lady
and abbesse. Ca. xv.

THan the kyng remēbred / with due cōcōsaunce
The excellent vertue / sadnes / and grauyte
Of his dere doughter / and the perfyte constauce
Her humble petycyon / and pure bygynyte
He thanked our lorde / with great humylyte
Of his infynyte grace / that so royall a floure
Frome hym descended / to his prayse and honoure.

He sende messages / in all goodly hast
With letters myssyue / thurgh his regyon
Commaundyng his subiectes / they shulde full fast
By a day assygned / be redy euerychone
In theyr best maner / with hym for to gone
To bynghe his doughter / to the hous of Ely
There to be relygyous / after her desyder.

Whan the day was come / of theyr appoyntment
The nobles of the realme / and lordes were redy
To attende on theyr souerayne / at his commaūdyment
Kynge Gulfer prepared / all thyng pleasauntly
And of his court / had chosen a noble company
In theyr best aray / royalte / and renowne
To offer saynt Werburge / to god and relygion.

The kyng on his Journey / rode forthe royally
The quene hym folowed / as is the custome
Werburge succeded them consequently
The peeres and his counseyll / knewe well theyr rowme
Dukes / erles / lordes / and many a worthy barowne

**Knyghtes / squyers / gentyls / of her kynred also
With ladyes and gentyl women / & seruañtes both two.**

**When the kynge approched / the sayd monastery
Saynt Audy than abbesse / toke her holy couent
And mette the sayd kynge / and all his company
With solempne processyon / and gretynge benyuolent
Praylynge our lorde god omnyppotent
Whiche of his goodnes / to that congregacyon
Sende them a syster / of suche perfeccyon.**

**Whereburge requyred / by the order of charyte
Fekely on her knees / to enter relygyon
Saynt Audy receyued / of her benygnyte
And graunted fre lycence / after her petycyon
Gladde were also / the hole congregacyon
And sange (Te deum) with moche reuerence
Magnifyenge our lorde / of his prouydence.**

**She was receyued / with moche solempnyte
Into the holy order / after her entent
To proue her sadnes / and humylyte
(As is the custome) and so be obedyent
To lyue euer after / humble / chaste / and contynent
Than dyd they Joye / merueylously encreas
Consyderynge her pacyens / and perfyte holynes.**

**Her royall dyademe / and shynynge coronall
Was fyrst refuted / for loue of our sauoure
The poore bayle accepted / and the symple pall
The royall ryche purpull / reiected that same houre
With other clothes of golde / sylkes of great honoure**

She toke lowe appareyll / bestures that were blake
All her plesaunt garmentes / she clerely dyd forsake.

Also she refused / her fathers realme and royalte
All ryches / rentes / pleasures / possessyon
With all worldely honoures / full of banyte
Lowly submyttyng her / vnder subieccyon
Certu to encrese / myndyng moost relyggon
She refused yet more her owne proper wyll
Put all to her abbesse / her order to fulfill.

C Of the great solempnyte kynge Gulfer made at the
ghostly maryage of saynt Werburge his doughter / to al
his louers / cosyns / and frendes. Ca. xvi.

Kynge Gulfer her father / at this ghostly spousage
Prepared great tryumphes / and solempnyte
Made a royall feest / as custome is of maryage.
Sende for his frendes / after good humanyte
Kepte a noble houtholde / shewed great lyberalyte
Bothe to ryche and poore / that to this feest wolde come
No man was denyed / euery man was well come.

Her uncles and aunces / were present there all
Ethelred / and Merwalde / and Mercelly also
The blessed kynges / whome sayntes we do call
Saint kenelwyd / saint keneburg / theyr systers both two
And of her noble lygnage / many other mo
Were redy that season / with reuerence and honour
At this noble tryumphe / to do all theyr deuoir.

The kynges mette them / with theyr company

Egypt kyng of kent / brother to the quene
The seconde was Aldulphe kyng of the east party
Brother to saynt Audry / wyfe and mayde serene
With dyuers of theyr progeny / and nobles as I wene
Dukes / erles / barons / and lordes ferre and nere
In theyr best aray / were present all in fere.

It were full tedypous / to make descripcyon
Of the great tryumphes / and solempne royalte
Belongynge to the feest / the honour and proupyon
By playne declaracyon / bpon euery partye
But the sothe to say / withouten ambeggyte
All herbes and floures / fragraunt sayre and swete
Were strawed in halles / and layd vnder theyr fete.

Clothes of golde and arras / were hanged in the hall
Depaynted with pyctures / and hystoryes manyfolde
Well wrought and craftely / with precyous stones all
Glyterynge as Phebus / and the beten golde
Lyke an erthly paradyse / pleasaunt to beholde
As for the sayd moynes / was not them amonge
But prayenge in her cell / as done all nouyce yonge.

The story of Adam / there was goodly wrought
And of his wyfe Eue / bytwene them the serpent
How they were deceyued / and to theyr peynes brought
There was Cayn and Abell / offerynge theyr present
The sacryfye of Abell / accepte full euydent
Cuball and Cubalcain / were purtrayed in that place
The inuentours of musyke / and craftes by great grace.

Noe and his shyppe / was made there curpously

Sendynge forth a rauē / whiche neuer came agayne
And how the dowie retourned / with a braunche hastely
A token of conforte and peace / to man certayne
Abraham there was / standynge upon the mount playne
To offer in sacryfye / Isaac his dere sone
And how the shepe for hym / was offered in oblacyon.

The twelue sones of Jacob / there were in purtrayture
And how into Egypt / yonge Joseph was solde
There was inprysoned / by a false coniectour
After in all Egypte / was ruler (as is tolde)
There was in pycture / Moyses wyse and bolde
Our lord apperynge / in bushe flammyng as fyre
And nothyng therof hent / lese / tree / nor spyre.

The ten plages of Egypte / were well embost
The chyldren of Israell / passynge the reed see
Kynge Pharoo drowned / with all his proude hoost
And how the two tables / at the mounte of Synaye
Were gyuen to Moyses / and how soone to ydolatry
The people were prone / and punyshted were therfore
How Datan and Abyron / for pryde were lost full youre.

Duke Josue was ioyned / after them in pycture
Ledynge the Israhelytes / to the lande of promysyon
And how the sayd lande / was dyuyded by mesure
To the people of god / by equall sundry porcyon
The Judges and bysshops / were there euerychone
The noble actes / and tryumphes Marcvall
freschly were browded / in these clothes royall.

Nexte to hye boorde lord / appered fayre and bryght

kyng Saul and Dauid / and prudent Salomon
Roboas succedynge / whiche soone lost his myght
The good kyng Elechys / and his generacyon
And so to the Machabees / and dyuers other nacyon
All these sayd stoyes / so ryche ly done and wrought
Belögyng to kyng Aulser / agayn y^e tyme were brought

But ouer the hye desse / in the pryncypall place
Where the sayd the kynges / late crowned all
The best hallynge hanged / as reason was
Wherein were wrought / the .ix. ordres angelycall
Wyrded in the Jerarchyes / not cessynge to call
Sanctus / sanctus / sanctus / blessed be the trynitye
Dominus deus sabaoth / the persones in one deyte.

Herte in ordre surynge / sette in goodly purtrayture
Was our blessed lady / floure of femynite
With the twelue apostles / eche one in his fygure
And the foure euangelystes / wrought moost curyously
Also the dyscyples / of chryst in theyr degre
Prechynge and techynge / vnto euery nacyon
The sayntes of holy chyrche / for theyr saluacyon.

Martyrs than folowed / ryght manifestly
The holy innocentes / whome Herode had slayne
Blessed saynt Stephan / the prothomartyr truly
Saynt Laurence / saynt Cyrcet / sufferynge great payne
With many other mo / than here ben now certayne
Of whiche sayd martyrs / exsample we may take
Pacyence to obserue / in herte for chrystes sake.

Confessours approached / ryght conuenient

freſſhly embroded / in ryche tyllhewe and tyme
Saynt Nicholas ſaynt Benedycte / and his couent
Saynt Jerom / Baſilyus / and ſaynt Auguſtine
Gregory the great doctour / Ambroſe and ſaynt Martyne
All theſe were ſette / in goodly purtrayture
Them to beholde / was a heuently pleaſure.

Argyngs them folowed / crowned with the lily
Amonge whome our lady / chefe preſydent was
Some crowned with rooſes / for theyr great byctory
Saynt Katherine / ſaynt Margarete / ſaynt Agathas
Saynt Cyrcly / ſaynt Agnes / and ſaynt Charytas
Saynt Lucy / ſaynt Alenefryde / and ſaynt Apolyn
All theſe were brothered / the clothes of golde within.

Upon the other ſyde / of the hall ſette were
Noble auncyent ſtoyes / & how the ſtronge Sampſon
Subdued his enemyes / by his myghty power
Of Hector of Troy / ſlayne by fals treaſon
Of noble Arthur / kyng of this regyon
With many other mo / whiche it is to longe
Playnly to expreſſe / this tyme you amonge.

The tables were couered / with clothes of Byaper
Rychely enlarged / with ſyluer and with golde
The cupborde with plate / byrryng ſayre and clere
Maarſhalles theyr offyces / fulfilled manyfolde
Of myghty wyne plenty / bothe newe and olde
All maner kynde / of meetes delycate
(When grace was ſayd) to them was preparate.

To this noble feſt / there was ſuche ordynaunce

That nothyng wanted / that gotten myght be
On see and on lande / but there was habundaunce
Of all maner pleasures / to be had for monye
The bordes all charged / full of meet plente
And dyuers subtyltes / prepared sothly were
With cordyall spyces / theyr ghestes for to chere.

The Joyfull wordes / and swete communycacyon
Spoken at the table / it were harde to tell
Eke man at lyberte / without interrupcyon
Bothe sadnes and myrthes / also pryue countell
Some adulatoryn / some the truthe dyd tell
But the great astaters / spake of theyr regyons
Knyghtes of theyr chivalry / of craftes the comons.

Certayne at eche cours / of seruyce in the hall
Trumpettes blewe bp / shalmes and claryons
Shewyng the melody with / toynes musycall
Dyuers other mynstrelles / in crafty proporcions
Made swete concordance / and lusty deuycyons
An heuenly pleasure / suche armory to here
Reioysyng the hertes / of the audyence full clere.

A synguler mynstrell / all other ferre passyng
Toyned his instrument / in pleasaunte armory
And sange moost swetely / the company gladyng
Of myghty conquerours / the famous byctory
Wherwith was rauysshed / theyr spyrytes and memory
Specyally he sange / of the great Alexandere
Of his tryumphes and honours / enduryng. xii. yere.

Solemply he songe / the state of the Romans
At Wurburge f.i.

Ruled vnder kynges / by polycy and wysedome
Of theyr hye iustyce / and ryghtfull ordynauns
Dayly encreasynge / in worthyp and renowne
Tyll Tarquyne y^e proude kyng / with y^e great cōfusyon
Oppressed dame Lucrece / the wyfe of Colatyne
Kynge neuer regned in Rome / syth that tyme.

Also how the Romayns / vnder thre dyctatours
Gouerned all regyons / of the worlde ryght wysely
Tyll Iulys Cesar / excellynge all conquerours
Subdued Pompeius / and toke the hole monarchy
And the rule of Rome / to hymselfe manfully
But Cassius Brutus / the fals conspiratour
Caused to be slayne / the sayd noble emperour.

After the sayd Iulys / succeded his syfter sone
Called Octauyanus / in the imperyll see
And by his precepte / was made descrypcyon
To euery regyon / lande / thyr / and cytee
A trybute to pay / vnto his dygnyte
That tyme was / byvnersall peas and honour
In whiche tyme was borne / our blessed sauoure.

All these hystories / noble and auncyent
Reioysynge the audyence / he sange with pleasuer
And many other mo / of the newe testament
Pleasaunt and profytable / for theyr soules cure
Whiche be omittted / now not put in bre
The mynysters were redy / theyr offyce to fulfyll
To take bp the tables / at theyr lordes wyll.

Whan this noble feest / and great solempnyte.

Dayly enduryng / a longe tyme and space
Was royally ended / with honour and royalte
Eche kyng at other / lysence taken hace
And so departed from thens / to theyr place
Kyng Aulfer retourned / with worthyp and renowne
Frome the house of Ely / to his owne mansyon.

¶ Of the holy professyon & ghostly conuersacyon saynt
Merburge bled at Ely in relyggon / vnder saynt Audy
her abbesse and colyn. Ca. xii.

So whan this byrgyn / the spouse of Ihesu
Had fully contynued / in holy relyggon
With mekenesse / pacyngs / and all vertu
fully the yere / of her probacyon
Than she made instaunce / for her professyon
Unto saynt Audy / her lady and abbesse
Whiche soone was graunted / with great gladnesse.

Ordynaunce they made / and great royalte
Her frendes were called / agaynst that season
She was professed / with great humylte
The obseruaunce done / with due deuocyon
She made solempne bowe / of ghostly conuersacyon
Mekely to obserue / obedience and chastyte
Enduryng her lyfe / and wylfull pouerte.

By the exsample / of her perfeccyon
Many dyuers persones / of her noble lynage
Refused this worlde / and entred relyggon
Renoungyng bayne pleasures / ryches and maryage
Enclyned to vertue / for theyr ghostly auauntage
Merburge f. ii.

As may be specyfied / here after folowynge
Theyr names / theyr affaite / and theyr good lyuynge.

Now this glorious byrgyn / after her desyre
Is ghostly maryed / to our lorde Ihesu
Accordynge to her entent / and true loue entyre
She dayly encreased / frome vertu to vertu
With more strayter lyfe / byces to subdu
The longer she endured / in relyggon
The better she prepared / her herte to deuocyon.

And tho this byrgyn / clerely dyd forsake
All ryches honours / and pleasures worldly
With all possessyons / for her lordes sake
She thought than she reygned / moost lyke a lady
Cause that she lyued / in chrystes seruyce dayly
And certayne it is / holy scripture recordynge
Who serues well god / dothe reygne lyke a kyng.

In prayer / penaunce / and / contemplacyon
Was all her busynesse / and study alway
Compasynge by what maner of medytacyon
She myght best please / our lorde to his pay
Offerynge her persone / a true sacryfyce every day
No labour her greued / loue was so seruent
Her body vpon erthe / her soule in heuen lent.

Sweete / comly creatures / ladyes euerychone
Sekynge for pleasures / ryches and arayment
Blynded by your beaute / and synguler affectyon
Consyder this byrgyn / humble and pacient
A spectacle of vertue / euer obedyent.

Beholde how the hase / clerely layde away
Her royall ryche clothes / and is in meke aray.

your garmentes now be gay and glorryous
Euery yere made / after a newe inuencion
Of sylke and beluet / costly and precyous
Brothered full ryche / after the best facyon
Shynnyng lyke angels / in your oppnyon
Where lesse wolde suffice / and content as well
As all that great cost / folowynge wyse counsell.

A playne example / now ye may take
Of this myghty kynges doughter dere
Whiche for the loue of god / dyd forsake
All such bayne pleasures / and garmentes clere
She gaue herselfe / to penaunce and prayere
Wherefore saye ladyes / do waye such vanyte
Prepare your selfe / to vertue and humylte.

Some of lowe byrthe / excellynge theyr degre
Doe couet to haue / as royall ryche besture
Worldly honours / also the sufferaynte
As they were ladyes / by lyne of nature
Of dredefull mysery / they bere the fygure
Proude as a pecoche / whelynge full bryght
All is but vanyte / contentynge the syght.

O Glorryous byrgyn / replete with synguler grace
Endowed with souerayne gyftes celestyall
Refusynge voyde pleasures / whan thou had space
And honours transitory / whiche hath brought in thall
A thousande persones / in ruyne to fall
Werburge.

A myrrour thou arte / of bygynall clennes
Of true obedyence / and pertyte mekenes.

So Werburge professed / to her rule full ryght
A redolent floure / all vertue to augment
As Lucyfer shynynge / a clere lampe of lyght
For whome her spouse / god sone omnyppotent
Shewed many myracles / to euery pacient
A sygne her loue was / supernaturall
Closed in our lorde / by grace supernall.

The excellent goodnes / of this moynes
And fame of vertue / with humplyte
Transcended all other / in pertyte holynes
So that sundry persones / approached that party
For ghostly conforte / counsell and remedy
Suche as to her came / penyue / woo / and sadde
Departed ioyfull / in soule mery and gladd.

She dayly prouyded / for ghostly treasure
To buyde her a place / a sure mansyon
Euer to remaine / with ioye and endure
In pleasure perpetuall / without corrupcyon
Whiche she optayned / by her deuocyon
After this departure / to reygne as a presydent
In eterne blys / with god omnyppotent

¶ A lytell treatyse of the lyfe of saynt Audry abbessle of
Ely / and of her holy couersacyon and great deuocyon /
vnder whome saynt Werburge was made nonne / and
professed.

Ca. xliiii.

The yere of our lord. bi. C. ix. and thyrty
 Regned saynt Anna / kynge of east Englande
 Whiche maryed saynt Herewith / of the North party
 They had noble yssue / as we vnderstande
 Prynce Aldulph and Turwyne / in story as is founde
 Saynt Serburge the quene / and blessed Audry
 Saynt Ethelberge / Withburge / a holy progeny.

This blessed Audry / called Etheldred
 Of two great kyngedomes / lynyally descendynge
 Was borne in Suffolke / as sayth saynt Bede
 In a lytell byllage / called Ermynge
 This noble prynces / and dere derlynge
 With many great vertues / of grace illumynate
 Magnyfyed her parage / and royall estate.

This blessed Audry / from her yonge aege
 Was dysposed euer / vnto sadnes
 Obedyent lowly / vnto her parentage
 Encreasynge in vertue / and constaunt sobrynes
 Worldely pleasures / dysportes / and wantonnes
 Lyghtnes of language / and all presumpcyon
 In this sayd byrgyn / had no domynacyon.

Sad and demure / she was in countenaunce
 Nothyng enclyned / vnto fragylte
 Benyng and pacyent / without perturbaunce
 Meke / curteys / gentyll / full of humylyte
 Pryde / stateleues / and sensualyte
 Were not in her soude / by any condycyon
 Curteyse in byhauour / vnto euery persone.

No man was greued / nor toke dyspleasure
At this sayd mayden / in her fathers hall
Euery honest persone / and reasonable creature
Were pleased with her / bothe one and all
None dyscontent / pryuate nor generall
She was so meke / and full of pacyence
That people desyred / to come to her presence.

She was beauteous / fayre and amiable
Pleasaunte to beholde / in gyftes of nature
Her countenaunce comly / swete / louely / and stable
Nothyng dysposed / vnto worldely pleasure
More lyke an angell / by all coniecture
Than a fragyll mayde / of sensuall appetyte
For in bayne pleasures / she had no delyte.

When that she came / to yeres of dyscrecyon
Pryuers her moeued / in way of maryage
Some offered ryches / royalte / and renowne
Some other posselions / landes and herytage
And some the sufferaynte / her mynde to asswage
All these she refused / for the loue of Ihesu
To whome she auowed / her chastyte full tru.

After that Venus / had her longe assayled
To peruerte her mynde / to worldly affeccyon
And of all nettes and engynes / therof had fayled
Than came to her presence / a prynce of renowne
Called duke Combert / of the east regyon
Whiche longe desyred / to haue her in spousage
At the laste optayned / the wyll of her parentage.

Unto whiche thyng / he wolde neuer enclyne
for all the mocyon / of her hye parentes
Tyll she was assured / by heuenly doctryne
To kepe her bygynnte / clere in conspens
Than she consented / without concupyscens
And with the sayd duke / she lyued in chastyte
Bothe mayden and wyfe / almost yeres thre.

After whose dethe / she remayned in Ely
In fastyng / prayer / bygyls / and penaunce
Whiche place was gyuen / to her Joynt and dowry
By Combert her husbände / with great pleasaunce
This yle of Ely / by deuyne purueaunce
With muddy waters / is compased aboute
Theyr enemyes to greue / and strongly to holde out.

Thyder came Egbryct / kyng of the north parte
To desyre saynt Audry / in matrimony
To whome she wolde neuer / consent in herte
for no maner counseyll / that myght be done truly
Tho her syster Serburge / moeued her tenderly
Tyll the angell of god / assured her to be
Quene / wyfe / and mayde / keepyng bygynnte.

Than Audry graunted / maryed for to be
Unto this foresayd / noble kyng Egsyde
And at the maryage / was great solemnyte
Tryumphe honoures / on euery syde
Great cost and royalte / they dyd prouyde
Frome Ely departed / vnto his owne place
In the North parte dwellynge / with great solace.

Serburge.

G.i.

By the grace of our lord god / moost of myght
And helpe of his mother / blessed mayd mary
By prayer of Audy / and by myracle ryght
Cogyder they lyued / bothe in pure chastyte
The naturall mocyon / of his lastcruyte
Was shortly flaked / and feruent desyre
By myracle / as water quencheth the fyre.

When he apperceyued / her asured constauce
Her perfyte holynes / and chaste contynence
His herte reioiced / of her contynuaunce
Of whome she desired / with humble reuerence
And synguler supplicacyon / to haue fre lysence
At Canwood abbay / to enter relyggon
Whiche the kynge graunted / for her deuocyon.

Saynt Ebba syster / unto saynt Oswolde
Was abbess and ruler / of that congregacyon
Where blessed Audy / ryght as she wolde
Was reuerently receyued / into relyggon
And after the yere / of her probacyon
Professed there was / by bysshop Wylfride
Where all worldly honours / she set on syde.

Frome thens she departed / to the ple of Ely
More quyetly to lyue / out of busynesse
For drede of the kynge / her husbände truly
Purposynge to take her / frome that holynesse
She toke two maydens / with her doubtlesse
And in theyr Journey / our lord of his grace
She wed dyuers myacles / at eche restinge place.

The archebysshop of yorke / Wylfryde her confessor
 Was depyved frome his benyfice / by the kynge cruelly
 Obserued pacyence / laudynge our sauour
 And folowed saynt Audry / to the place of Ely
 Whiche (as afore is sayd) was her Joynt and dowry
 And electe her abbesse / on that congregacyon
 Moost worthy to be / for her holy conuersacyon.

Where Audry buryded / a chyrche of our lady
 With helpe of kynge Aldulph / her brother naturall
 Wytaunt a myle / frome the olde monastery
 founded by saynt Austyn / for meryte spyrituall
 Whiche place all desolate / she edyfied full specyall
 By her proupyon / an other noble monastery
 The yere of grace / fyre hundredth seuenty and thre.

When the werke was ended / as her wyll was
 She endowed the abbay / with fraunches and lyberte
 And gaue the hole yle of Ely / to that place
 With all commodytes / profettes / and yllues fre
 frome all exaccyons / exempte clerely to be
 Of kynge and bysshop / confyrmed it at Rome
 With all prelates & prynces / consentynge of this regyon.

In short tyme and space / to Audry dyd resorte
 Relygious men and women / a great company
 Professed in that place / for theyr ghostly conforte
 Renounsynge bayne pleasures / & honours transitory
 Amonge whome saynt Werburge / professed solemply
 Promysed in audyence / to lyue a lyfe monestycall
 After saynt Benettes rule / for the lyfe eternall.

Werburge

g.ii.

Also the yere of grace / fyre hundredth seventy and nyne
 In the moneth of Julii / in the nyynth kalendas
 To heuen departed / saynt Audry the quene
 Than reygnyng in Kent / kyng Lothary by grace
 Aldulph in east Englande / her brother whiche was
 Kyng Offryde her husbände / in Northumberlande
 Also kyng Ethelrede / than reygnyng in Mercelande

C A breue reherſal of y^r lyfe of ſaynt Serburge / graſid
 mother to ſaynt Werburge. And of her comynge to Ely
 to her ſyſter Audry from Shepay monaſtery. Ca. xij.

The holy matrone / and quene ſaynt Serburge
 A kynges daughter / & moder to kynges twayne
 Syſter to ſaynt Audry / & graundmother to Werburge
 Of noble parentage / is comen certayne
 Of two realmes deſcendynge / lynyally and playne
 By her father / from the realme of east Englande
 And by her mother / from Northumberlande.

Her father ſaynt Anna / as ſayth myne auctour
 Was kyng of the east parte / ſone to Egnicius
 Whiche Anna was maryed / with moche honour
 To Herewith / daughter to kyng Herericus
 And ſyſter to ſaynt Hylde / the byrgyn gracypus
 To whome ſaynt Edwyn / the glorious martyr
 Kyng of Northumberlande / was great graundfather.

This ſayd kyng Anna / lyued a longe ſpace
 In welthe / woorthyp / honour / and proſperyte
 With his quene Herewith / by ſynguler grace
 Obſeruyng Juſtyce / pacyence / and equitye

Kepte the preceptes / of god almyghte
Mercyfull and lyberall / to the poore in payne
Whiche kynge by Penda / was murdred and slayne.

As the ryuer passeth / oftetymes the heed fountayne
The lytell grasse or ympe / transcendeth the tree
Lykewyle theyr chyldren / encrefed certayne
In mekenes / pacyence / and perfyte charyte
Aboue theyr parentes / in vertue and benygnyte
So that theyr name / lynage / and hye estate
By them was magnifyed / prayfed and decorate.

Kynge Anna and Hereswith / had a noble yssue
Syre goodly chyldren / pleasaunt to beholde
None sayre in this lande / myndoynge all vertue
And to all good maners / dysposed manyfolde
yet was theyr sayrenes / not equall to be tolde
To theyr deuocyon / and synguler goodnes
Whose names expressed / ben afore doubtes.

Serburge the eldest / of the systers all
Instructe by her parentes / in vertuous dyscypline
folowynge theyr counsell / in herte full specyall
Prepared her soule / after theyr doctryne
for aboue the age / of so yonge a femynyne
So that euery day / by grace and wyldome
In her dyd growe / some plant of deuocyon.

In all this realme / dylated was her fame
That whan she appoched / vnto lawfull aage
Prynces / dukes / erles / herynge of her name
Desyred to haue Serburge / in maryage
Merburge.

g.iii.

And busily laboured / vnto her parentage
This mayd was maried / with honour full excellent
Vnto Ercombert / the noble kynge of Kent.

To whome kynge Ethelbyrt / graundfather was
The fyrst chrysten kynge / of Saxons and chefe floure
Baptysed by saynt Austyn / thurgh heuently grace
He was to holy chyrche / a specyall benefactour
Monasteryes and priores / founded with great honoure
Kynge Cadwalde his sone / exemple of hym toke
Whiche was father to Ercombert / as sayth my boke.

This lady Serburge / circumfulted with grace
After her desyre / and vertuous entent
Had leuer the monastery / than the saye palace
The chyrche to bylte / than with maryage be lent
But to her parentes / she was euer obedyent
Followinge theyr counseyll / and of her frendes dere
In lawfull maryage / toke the sayd kynge her fere.

A noble generacyon / she hadde by the kynge
Egbyrt and Lothary / two prynces prepotent
And two holy daughters / in bertue shynyng
Ermenylde and Erhengode / by lynyall descent
This Ermenylde maried / with honour equyvalent
Vnto kynge Gulfer / had a royall yssue
The glorious Werburge / replete with bertue.

Her syster Erhengode / refused utterly
Honours / worshyp / and worldly possession
Ryches / maryage / and pleasures transytory
Went vnto fraunce / with humble deuocyon

At the Cytee of Burges / entred relygion
Where Ethelberge her aunt / was ruler and abbesse
Togeder they lyued / in perfyte holynesse.

This honorable Serburge / and blessed matrone
Refusyng worldly honours / and solempnyte
Preferred mekenesse / and perfyte deuocyon
Above all ryches / power and dygnyte
Auoyned ambycyon / obserued humylyte
Upon poore people / euer had compassyon
And them releued / with due mynystracyon.

She made her palace / manytymes an hospytall
Her pryuate cubycle / a deuoute oratory
As a kynde mother amiable / in courte and in hall
Mekely fulfilled / the seven werkes of mercy
Oftetymes in the chyrche / selde amonge compaign
yet euer whan she myght / haue tyme and space
Magnifyed and prayed / our lorde in secrete place.

She instructe her husbände / in ghostly vertu
To great holynesse / and synguler perfeccyon
So by her counseyll / with the grace of Ihesu
Frome infydelyte / purged was that regyon
Destroyed theyr ydolles / theyr sectes euerychone
Restaured temples / vnto chrystes honour
founded monasteryes / by her cost and labour.

The kynge by her mocyon / commaunded straitly
All his people and subiectes / vpon sharpe correccyon
To obserue prayer / and penaunce deuoutely
And truly for to fast / the holy tyme of Lenton
Werburge. g.iiii.

The archbeshop Theodorus / and fathers of relygion
Consyderynge her pacyence / and benygnyte
Reioysed in her dedes / and prayesd the tynyte.

When the famous Ercombert / the sayd kynge of Kent
foure & twenty yere had reygned / in honour full royall
With blessed Serburge / his quene excellent
Than he departed / frome this lyfe mortall
The quene prepared / the obsequyes funerall
With great lamentacyon / and great royalte
As was conuenient / for his state and degre.

After that Serburge / refused worldly pleasure
Entred relygion / professed chastyte
At Shepay monastery / in Kent full sure
Buyded at her cost / full honorable
After electe Abbess / and ruler of that compaignye
To whome she was / a myrrour of mekenes
And exmple of vertue / and proued holynes.

As she was occupped / in medytacyon
An heuenly messanger / to her was sent
She wynged how for synne / and transgressyon
Englande shulde suffer / great purgymment
And be subdued / with greuous torment
Wherefore she leste / in good rule that place
And dyd electe to them / an other abbace.

Serburge toke lycence / of her systers all
Commendynge them / into the tynyte
And so departed / fro her chyldren spyrituall
With labour attayned / to the hous of Elpe

There to be subiecte / to her syſter Audy
And to her doctryne / apply her entent
Unto relygion / euer ſounde obedynt.

Saynt Audy was gladd / of her ſyſters compny
In lyke maner / were all the hole congregacyon
With myſthes and ſolace / in ſoule reioyſyng
To haue the preſence / of ſo worthy a perſone
There lyued togyder / in perſyte deuocyon
Tyll blessed Audy / frome this lyfe mortall
Departed was / to the lyfe eternall.

After whoſe buryall / Sexburge was electe
To be abbeſſe and ruler / ouer that couent
Whiche to all vertue / her mynde dyd erecte
And the .xvi. yere after / with labours dyligent
She tranſlate ſaynt Audy / that noble preſydent
Beynge hole incorrupte / alſo ſubſtancyall
In body and in beſture / by grace ſupernall.

¶ How ſaynt Ermenyde after the dethe of kynge Gul
fer her huſbade was made a nonne at Ely / vnder her mo
ther ſaynt Sexburge abbeſſe / and Werburge her de
uoute daughter. Ca.xx.

¶ If Mercyes the kynge / whā the ſoreſayd Gulſere
Had regned in honour / worſhypp and royalte
With ſaynt Ermenyde his quene / fully .xvii. yere
Unto euerlaſtyng blyſſe / departed than he
And buryed was / with moche ſolempnyte
In Lychefeld chyrche / after hym there dyd ſuccede
Into the kyngdome / his brother Ethelrede.

The quene for her husbände / made great lamentacyon
Dolefully lamentynge / nyght and day his departure
As nature enquired / enduryng a longe season
Remayned in wydowhede / and mournynge besture
yet after all heurynesse / penaunce / and dysconforture
She reioysed in soule / to be at lyberte
Entendynge relyggon / by grace of the trynityte.

Soone she departed / to the hous of Ely
Refusynge this worlde / pleasures posseltyon
Instauntly requyred / with perfyte humylyte
To be a moynes / accepte in relyggon
Gladde was the abbess / of her conuersyon
And thanked our lord / of his specyall grace
So dyd all the systers / within the sayd place.

Her naturall mother / blessed Serburge
That tyme was lady / and chefe presydent
There was professed / her doughter Werburge
An exemple of mekenes / to all the couent
Ermenryde thanked god / and was obedyent
To her mother Serburge / a myrrour of vertu
Also to her doughter / the spouses of Ihesu.

It passeth mannes reason / playnly to expresse
Her vertuous lyfe / and ghostly conuersacyon
In prayer / penaunce / and proued mekenesse
In perfyte obedyence / and synguler deuocyon
In bygyls / abstynence / and in hys perfeccyon
The cotydyane labours / her body to chastyce
That her soule may be / to god true sacryfyce.

By cause that Werburge / in order was senpoure
Her mother Ermenylde / gaue her the sufferaynte
Preferrynge her doughter / with mekenes and honoure
But yet her doughter / of a naturall ampte
Preferred her mother / with humble senporyte
And so bytwene them / was a swete contencion
Wheder shulde more subiecte be / to other in relygion.

Afore whan Ermenylde / was vnder maryage
Unto holy matrones / she was comparable
Sara / Rebecca / Rachell / and Sybell sage
And saynt Elsyabeth / with other mo honorable
Now in relygion / she is moost notable
Knownen by her vertues / and sadde dysposicion
That vnder matrimony / was her intencion.

Ermenylde subdued / by synguler deuyne grace
All fragyll mocyons / and sensualyte
Lyke maner as Judyth / Olofernes slayne hase
She mortyfied all pleasures / lustes and volupte
Lykewyse as Jaell / dyd the prynce Sylare
A duches of vertue / as whylom was Delbora
Used the oratory / in prayer as dyd Anna.

After the departure / and wofull buryall
Of Serburge her mother / abbess and lady
Her doughter Ermenylde / the blessed monyall
Was chosen abbess / and ruler of Wy
As sheweth dan Wylliam / of Maluyssbury
How first was Audrey / than Serburge her syster
Afterwarde was abbess / Ermenylde her doughter.

The lyfe of Ermenylde / was euer vertuous
Pleasaunt to god / and her systers euerychone
In the syght of god / her dethe was precyous
Playnly notyfied / by her conuersacyon
She vertuously gouerned / her congregacyon
Frome this lyfe departed / to eternall glory
As sayth her legende / the Idus of february.

And buryed was / with moche lamentacyon
In the holy monastery / and house of Ely
Amonge her parentage / and congregacyon
Where she is shyned / with her aunt saynt Audrey
And with her mother / saynt Serburge rychely
For whome our sauyour / of his specyall grace
Sheweth dayly myracles / in that sayd place.

One of the myracles / we shall now rehers
Our lord for her shewed / at Ely abbay
After her transacyon / the story dothe expres
It fortunied in Whytson weke / vpon a thursday
An Englysshman was bounden / in wofull aray
Fetered with yrons / bothe on handes and fete
Wrongfully accused / as ye may all wete.

By instaunt request / he gate hym lycence
To vylte the tombe / of saynt Ermenylde
Whome he requyred / with humble reuerence
And meke petycyon / frome the herte full mylde
To be deliuered / and fully reconsyde
Whose humble desyre / and synguler supplicacyon
Was fully graunted / to his consolacyon.

At this tyme / whan this holy man was prayenge
 Whan the Deken redde the holy gospell
 By meane of Ermenylde / to our lord and kyng
 Frome his handes and fete / the yrons done fell
 By grace aboue nature / merueylously to tell
 That the sayd yrons / insyght of all the betherne
 Sprange by sodenly / and lyght vpon the aulter.

¶ Aliud miraculum.

An other myracle / declare now may we
 Done at the sayd Cy / by this holy matrone
 In presence of the pryor / and all the fraternyte
 Whiche pryor of this mater / had best notycyon
 Alscolle mayster of Innocentes / after the custome
 Gaue lyfence / vpon saynt Ermenyldes day
 To all his chyldren / to sport them in play.

Whan the feest / and solempnyte was done
 The yonge tender chyldren / wanton and necligent
 Dredynge theyr mayster / for fere of correccyon
 To the holy thyrne / they assembled full dyligent
 Trustynge therby of pardon / after theyr entent
 Desyred theyr mayster / for saynt Ermenyldes sake
 To pardon theyr trespass / and no dyspleasure take.

The mayster fulfylled / with hastynes and euny
 Toke them frome the tombe / with great indygnacyon
 Without dyscrecyon / punysshed them greuously
 Gyuyng no honour / to the saynt ne deuocyon
 Rebuked them sore / sayenge with insultacyon
 Croue ye to be spared / from punysshment this day
 For saynt Ermenyldes sake / nay nay do way.

After all this done / the nexte nyght solowynge
Within the sayd mayster / to his bedde was gone
His great unkyndenes / saynt Ermenylde remembrynge
Rewarde hym Justly / after his guerdon
His handes and his fete / prompte to persecucyon
Were sodenly smytten / made lame / contracte also
No power had to ryle / to moeue nor to go.

This todayne punysshement / langour / confusyon
Clered hym greuously in all his body
Moost terrible of all / of helthe desperacyon
Inwardly hym troubled / with paynes horryble
But yet by grace / he thought best remedy
Sende for his chyldren / bpon the other day
Humble asked them pardon / in a wofull aray.

Desyrynge his scolers / for loue and charyte
To cary hym moost carefull / to her sepulture
To requyre for hym grace / helthe and prosperyte
Of god and saynt Ermenylde / with all theyr cure
They toke hym tenderly / ye may me leue full sure
Amonge them all / with mynde dplygent
And brought to the shryne / this wretched impotent.

They prayed for hym / to our blessed sauyour
And to saynt Ermenylde / a longe tyme and space
Knelynge on theyr knees / wepyng full sore
In prayer and psalmody / for his helthe and solace
And so contynuryng / by our lordes great grace
He that afore was lame / bothe on fote and hande
Restored to helthe / departed hole and sounde.

T How kynge Ethelrede seyng the holy conuersacyon
of Werburge his nece / made her lady and abbesse at We
don / Trentam / and Humbury. And by her counseyll and
exsample was made moke at Bardeney abbay. Ca. xxi.

T He famous pryncce / and foresayd Ethelrede
Brother to kynge Aulfer / as lawfull enherytour
To the sayd kyngedome / dyd nexte hym succede
Electe of his peeres / with worshyp and honour
Permytted by his chyrche / to be theyr gouernour
Bycause pryncce Kenrede / his brother sone
Was yonge and not able / to rule his kyngdome.

This sayd kynge Ethelrede / clerely consyderynge
With due circumstaunce / the hysse perfeccyon
Of Werburge his nece / and vertuous lyuynge
Her great holynesse / and ghostly conuersacyon
Dayly encreasyng / with feruent deuocyon
The excellent fame / and myracles full ryght
Shewed by our sauour / bothe day and nyght.

These good examplers / grounded in vertu
Moued kynge Ethelrede / in soule and in mynde
And clerely conuerted / thowhe the grace of Ihesu
To despyse this worlde / wretched and blynde
Pryncypally by grace / wyten as we fynde
For her great goodnes / and vertues excellent
He made her lady / ruler / and president.

Ouer all the nonnes / of euery monastery
Within his realme / to gouerne and to guyde
To instructe and informe / and to exemplyfy

To encrease deuocyon / vpon euery syde
Vertue to exalte / to subdue vyce and pryde
That holy relyggon / pleasaunt to chryst Ihesu
A yght dayly encrease / frome vertu to vertu.

Also he gaue Werburge / great possessyon
Landes / and rentes / ryches withall
To edify and repayre / places of relyggon
After her desyre / with fauour specyall
Wherwith she buylded / famous memoryall
Two fayre monasteryes / Trentam and Humberg
Possessed with rentes / landes / and lyberte.

Also by sufferaunce / of the sayd kynge truly
She translate the kynges maner of Wedon
Whiche was in Hamptonstyre / vnto a monastery
Of holy women / obseruynge relyggon
Suffyciently endowed / with lybertes / possessyon
Of whiche sayd places / she had the gouernaunce
As worthy maystres / all vertu to auaunce.

The yere of grace / fyre hundreth foure score and nyen
As sheweth myne auctour / a Bryton Giraldus
Kynge Ethelred / myndynge moost the blyss of heuen
Edyfied a collage chyrche / notable and famous
In the subbarbes of Chester / pleasaunt and beauteous
In the honour of god / and the Baptyst saynt Iohan
With helpe of bysshop Aulfryce / and good exortacyon.

Also at the humble / and spinguler supplicacyon
Of blessed Egwyn / bysshop of worcestre
This kynge gaue a place / for a fundacyon

To buylde a monastery / to relygious brethur
At Eufam vpon Auen / for heuenly tresur
With a large precynct / to compas all the abbay
More quyetly to serue / our sauour nyght and day.

After this tyme / Ethelrede the kyng
By his counseyll maryed / a beautefull lady
Called quene Edryde / a woman of good lypynge
Borne in the North parte / doughter to kyng Edwy
To whome saynt Oswalde / was vncler truly
The yssue betwene them / after to succede
Was a noble pryncer / nomynate Colrede.

Agaynst his enemyes / the kyng gate victore
Fortunate in batayle / sore oppressed Kent
In all this regyon / famous was his chyualry
Namely he subdued / at the water of Trent
Edryde of Northumberlande / a kyng auncyent
His brother in lawe / whan Edryde agaynst reason
Entred his landes / by subtyll intrusyon.

But after that Edryde / his quene was slayne
By people of the North parte / moost cruelly
The kyng frome that tyme / by grace certayne
Chaunged his maners / and lypynge dayly
Frome temporall cares / and busynesse worldly
To ghosly werkes / and contemplacyon
Seking for heuen / with pure deuocyon.

Specyally he folowed / saynt Werburge counsell
Allynge hym after / her swete ghosly doctryne
The clere examplers / as we afore dyd tell
Werburge.

b.i.

Mooued his conscience / to ghosly dyscyplýne
With suche contrýcyon / by specyall grace deuýne
That all hayne pleasures / and honours transytory
Were clere expulled / and put out of memory.

This kynge refused / his septre and crowne
Clothes of Tyshew / and purpull full royall
With ryches / lybertes / pleasures / possessyon
For the loue of Ihesu / in herte myncarpall
And for the meryte / of his soule helthe withall
So whan he had reygned / nyne and ttwenty yere
He chaunged his habyte / sayth the story clere.

At a relygyous place / nomyñate Bardenay
In Lyncolne shyre / vnder his domynyon
Singular byloued / of hym alway
Desyred the habyte / with meke supplicacyon
And was receyued / professynge relygion
Euer after to obserue / the essencys the
Obedyence / chastyte / and wylfull pouerte.

He assygned his crowne / and temporall degnyte
Unto pryñce Kenrede / his brother sone
As true enherytour / to haue regalyte
For in pure obedyence / prayer and medytacyon
Ethelrede encreased / with feruent deuocyon
And as declareth / wyllyam of Malwysbury
After was made abbot / of the sayd monastery.

¶ The holy conuersacyon of kynge Kenred brother to
saint Werburge / & how he refused his crowne / and was
made monke at Rome / & ther departed a holy cōfessour.
Ca. xxi.

So whan kynge Etheldrede / by heuently grace
 At Bardenay abbay / professed relygion
 Than pryncce Kenrede / his successour was
 And toke the Empyre / the sepre and the crowne
 With moche worthyp / royalte / and renowne
 As nexte of inherytaunce / by law naturall
 To be kynge of Mercens / by dyscent lynyall.

This noble kynge Kenrede / replete with vertu
 Brother to Werburge / obserued truly
 The commaundmentes of god / & his lawes moost tru
 Obedyent to our sauyour / and lorde almyghty
 Loued holy chyrche / moost tenderly
 A mysted Justyce / to his subiectes all
 Mercifull to the poore / piteous and lyberall.

In all his realme / was no dyuersyte
 Malyce was subdued / rancour and debate
 Vertue encreased / true loue and charyte
 Enuy was exyled / and all pryuy hate
 Thefte / murther / robbery / were founde at no gate
 True men myght lyue / without beracyon
 Pollers / promoters / had no domynacyon.

He gaue to our sauyour / and bysshop Egwyn
 For ghostly meryte / with moche honoure
 Of tenementes and landes / playnely to determyne
 Within worceterstyre.iiii. score and foure
 To maynteyne the monastery / spoken of before
 Cuesham vpon Auen / byfore lawfull wytnes
 As the legende of Egwyn / truly dothe expres.

Werburge.

b.ii.

To the courte of Rome / kynge Kenred went
So dyd Olia kynge / of the east Saxons
Also bysshop Egwyn / by one assent
Deuoutly to byspte / all the hole stacyons
Of the cytee of Rome / with humble supplicacyons
Thankynge our lorde / of his mercy
Hath them preserued / and all theyr company.

This holy bysshop / and kynge Kenrede
Offered to our holy father / pope boneface
With mekenes deuocyon / for ghostly mede
Afore his collage / wytnes in that case
The foresayd monastery / and relygyous place
Frome that day euer after / to be clerely exempte
To the popes holynes / immediatly obedyent.

When they had optayned / perfyte expedycon
Of all theyr bulles / after theyr entent
They toke lycence / and had the popes beneson
And towarde Englade / retourned and went
Prayfynge our lorde / with herte and loue feruent
For theyr good spede / and prosperous Jounay
Preserued in good helthe / all to theyr countray.

After all this done / Kenrede the sayd kynge
Commaunded to be had / a counseyll generall
By letters myssyue / his peeres and lordes cytynge
Shortly to be present / with hym one and all
As well the spyrytualte / as the temporall
The Seyn was kepte / at a place called Alue
And thyder assembled / his prelates of degre.

Berthunaldus / the archebysshop of Canturbury
The archbysshop of yorke / called Wylfryde
With bysshops / suffreganes / archdekenes many
Dukes / erles / barons / upon euery syde
Knyghtes / esquyers / and comunes that tyde
Were redy to knowe / the kynges mynde and pleasure
Well ordred in place / and scyence kepte sure.

This glorryous Kenrede / crowned with golde
Clothed in purpull / rose bp fro his place
After due salutacyon / the cause mekely he tolde
Why he for them sende / and wherfore it was
That they shulde testyfy / with hym in this case
What landes he gaue / towarde the fundacyon
Of the sayd monastery / with grete deuocyon.

And how for that abbay / he went to Rome
And made the place subiecte / immediatly
To our father boniface / and gate an exempcyon
For ever to remayne / to the sayd monastery
With pardons and pryvyliges / there redde openly
And many other benefytes / of great commodyte
Wryten in theyr grauntes / who lyst them to se.

Requyringe the lordes / spyrituall and temporall
To graunte to the same / with good entent
And it to confyrme / and roborate specyall
With charters and dedes / and seales patent
To whose petycyon / they dyd all consent
Made confyrmacions / and grauntes them amonge
With a terryble sentence / who dothe the place wronge.

Werburge.

h.iii.

Kynge Kenrede confyderynge / the great holynes
Of his noble parentes / his vncles euerychone
They royall progeny / the sufferaunt goodnes
From this lyfe transytory / to heuen agone
Namely the vertue / and feruent deuocyon
Of his syster Werburge / and his aunces all
Moued his mynde / to seke for lyfe eternall.

And as saynt Bede sayth / whan this noble kynge
Had reigned fyue yere / in great prosperyte
He forsoke this worlde / and chaunged his lyfynge
Refusynge his crowne / septr / and dygnyte
All hayne honours / ryches and regalyte
And made his vncles sone / prynce Coelrede
To take his empyre / after hym to succede.

So with all gentylnes / and humylyte
The kynge of his subiectes / toke leue speccall
Commendynge his people / to the trynyte
Them to conserue / spyrytuall and temporall
Of his departure / dolorous were they all
Thus for the loue / of our sauyoure
He refused this worlde / pleasures and honoure.

And went to Rome agayne / the yere of grace
Seuen hundredeth and eyght / by full computacyon
Wyltynge the itacyons / frome place to place
There was professed / to saynt Benettes relygion
Used bygyls / fastynge / prayer / medytacyon
Where this holy monke / frome this lyfe transytory
With vertu departed / to eternall glory.

T Of y^r feruent & ghosly deuocyon of saynt Merburge
& vertuous gouernance of her places / & of y^r great humi-
lite the bled to her sisters / & al other creatures. Ca. xiii.

T His venerable Merburge / & moynes gracious
for her great vertue / and perfyte holynesse
Electe to be gouernour / ouer the nonnes relygeous
By her vncler kynge Ethelrede / of his goodnesse
ouer dyuers monasteryes (as is sayd) expresse
Was consecrate abbesse / and lady gracious
By the byshop of Lychesfelde / nomynat Seruulfus.

And thus she departed / fro the hous of Ely
Wherin she bled / heuenly medytacyon
With lycence optayned / in mynde sad and heuy
So were the systers / and all the congregacyon
Of her departure / knowynge her conuersacyon
But as wolde charyte / they had great gladnes
Knowynge by her vertue / relyggon to encres.

The spouses of Ihesu / and floure of benygnyte
Consyderynge her selfe / a lady and presydent
Ordered her monasteryes : ryght well and wysele
Receyued in systers / chaste / humble / obedyent
ouer them made rulers / vertuous / and pacyent
Her subiectes to instructe / and counseyll day and nyght
Vertue to exalte / and byte depyue aryght.

This noble abbesse / remembrynge her duty
What charge it is / to rule a congregacyon
Humble requyred the grace of god almyghty
And delygently prepared / to supple her rowme.

Pryncypally she gaue / to them euerychone
Perfyte exsample / of vertue in her dede
With bertuous doctryne / the same to procede.

A myrrour of mekenesse / she was to them all
A floure of chastyte / and well of clennes
The fruyte of obedyence / in her was specyall
Refusynge bayne pleasures / honours and ryches
Content with lytell / an exsample of lowlynnes
As dothe belonge / vnto wylfull pouerte
Pryde ha no relydence / but all humptyte.

She was a mynyster / rather than a maystres
Her great preemyence / caused no presumpcyon
She was a handmayd / rather than a pyores
Seruyng her systers / with humble subieccyon
Subduyng her body / to penaunce and afflyccyon
Subiecte to the soule / as reason wolde shulde be
A true sacryfyce / offered to the trynityte.

It was no merueyll / tho all her couent
Under suche a ruler / encreased in vertu
Seyng her exsample / afore them dayly present
Euer augmentynge / throwe the helpe of Ihesu
Worldly desyres / she clerely dyd subdue
She neuer ware lynon / by day or by nyght
All ryche bayne bestures / she set by them but lyght.

In prayer medytacyon / the tyme she dyspent
Proued : for euery nyght / longe afore matyns
She wolde bpryfe / at an houre conuenient
And deuoutely say / afore our lordes presens

**Dauyd spalter holly knelynge / with great reuerence
Of that her systers / came to the oratory
To say dryue seruyce / fyndyng her all redy.**

**At after matyng / the bled contemplacon
Contynually abydyng / vnto the day lyght
Prostrate on the grounde / or knelyng in deuocyon
Weppynge full tenderly / with teeres downeryght
Many holy praysons / the sayd day and nyght
Pyteous / mercyable / and full of charyte
To the poore people / in theyr necessyte.**

**This lady obserued / suche sharpe abstynence
That one dayly repast / wolde her well suffyse
Delycate dyllhe meates / were put out of her presence
So nature were content / in moost humble wyse
The Worde of god / was moost delycate seruyce
Fyndyng moche more / the soule to satysfy
Than please and content / her enemy the body.**

**These sayd exemples / with many other mo
Pleasaunte vnto Ihesu / she taught her couent
Them to preserue / frome theyr mortall fo
By synguler vertue / grace to augment
Her precepte and lyuyng / were euer correspondent
She neuer commaunded syster / do any thyng
But it was fulfilled / in her owne doyng.**

**She exorted her chyldren / euer to deuocyon
With manyfolde doctrynes / ydenes to exchewe
Lyke a tender mother / had pyte and compassyon
She dayly fedde them / and nourysched in all vertue
Werburge. i.i.**

And diligently prayed / our sauyour Ihesu
Them to preserue / of his insynye grace
Frome peryll of perthyng / in blyse to se his face.

Also the .xii. degrees / of humylyte
Pacyence / quyetnes / and great perfecyon
Were well obserued / with true loue and charyte
Amonge her systers / the hole congregacyon
And the thre essencys / of relygion
Wylfull pouerte / chastyte / and obedyence
were truly fulfilled / proued by the consequence.

As for a pastyme / amonge her systers all
She caused to be redde / awordynge ydenesse
The swete legendary / for a memoryall
And Citas patrum / the wyng great swetenesse
With other narracyons / of grace and goodnesse
Oft tymes to her couent / she had a comyn sayenge
Please god and loue hym / and doubte ye nothyng.

All reders excuse me / tho I can not expresse
For lacke of lernynge / the vertues morall
The hye perfecyon / and proued holynesse
Of this pure byrgyn / and sanctymonyall
Wherwith was decorate / her lyfe monestycall
Manyfest With myracles / by myrte of her mekenesse
As the true bystory / playnly dothe expresse.

The worthy myracles / of this byrgyn pure
Dylated were / though all this regyon
By deuynne sufferance / aboue nature
Profytable / to euery chrysten synyguler persone

In teneffes / trouble / payne or heuyn
Of her they haue refuge / helpe / and socoure
By her merytes / and prayer / that euery honoure.

Her merytes were / moche more commendable
Than were her myracles / manyfest and playne
For why by her merytes / famous and notable
Sygnes and myracles / were shewed full playne
In the house of Ely / by the grace of our sufferayne
And in euery place / where she kepte residence
Of whome parte folowen / in this rude sentence.

¶ Now at Medon wyld gees were pynned by her com
maundment / & also releffed & put at lyberte. Ca. xxi.iii.

This holy byrgyn / whan she dwelled at Medon
In Northamptonshyr / with a deuoute couent
Whiche place somtyme / was the kynges mansyon
Translated to an abbay / by her commaundment
A myracle was done / by this noble presydent
As the true legende / playnly dothe vs say
And all the inhabytauntes / vnto this present day.

A great multytude / somtyme of wyld gees
Communely called Gauntes / made a great descryptyon
Upon her landes / pastures / waters / and feldes
Deuourynge the cornes / and fruytes of Medon
Greuous to her subiectes / within that possessyon
The people coude fynde / no suffycient remedy.
But she wed theyr complainte / to Werburge theyr lady.

¶ Whan Werburge had herde / this greuous complainte
Werburge. l.ii.

How the cornes were wasted / y^e tenants harte thereby
Her herte was mooued / with charyte than certayne
To saue her fruytes / and helpe her company
Therefore she commaunded a seruaunt go hastily
To dyue those wyld gees / & bynge home to her place
There to be pynned / and punyshed for theyr trespase.

The messenger merueyled / and mused in his mynde
Of this strange message / stode styll in a study
Knowynge it well / it passed couste of kynde
Wyld gees for to pynne / by any mannes polycy
Syth nature hath ordeyned / suche bydes to fly
Supposynge his lady / had ben vnrasonable
Commaundyng to do / a thyng vnpossyble.

With wordes of conforte / she sayd to hym agayne
Go in my name / do my commaundymment
The seruaunt went forth / thynkyng all but vayne
Unto the foldes / where the bydes were lent
And sayd his message / with mynde and good entent
My lady commaundes you / bydes euerychone
Afore me to go / vnto her proper mansyone.

A merueylous thyng / transcendynge nature
Unto his wordes / the gees were obedynt
Not one departed / fro thens ye may befare
Of all the nombre / that there were present
Towarde her place / afore hym they went
Meekely / as yf they had reason naturall
Unto her presence / he brought the gauntes all.

Wredfully daryng / comen now they be

They wynges traylynge / entred into the hall
for great confusyon / after they kynde and propyete
flournyng in theyr maner / abydyng one and all
Her wyll and Judgmennt / with mercy specyall
Lamentynge all nyght / there in captyuyte
Tyll the morowe after / withouten lyberte.

All that same nyght / Werburge dyd contynue
In deuoute prayers / and ympnes celestyall
After her olde custome / bled in all bertue
In the mornynge after / the bydes that were thall
With hye voyces (as yf it were) on her dyd call
for grace and pardon / of theyr offence
And of departure / to haue fre lycence.

Than she full pyteous / to euery creature
Upon these bydes haupnge compassyon
Delyuered them / frome all daunger and cure
frely to departe / vnder this condycyon
That none of them / vpon the lordshyp of Wedon
Shulde make destruccyon / nor lyght by any way
On cornes or fruytes / neuer after that day.

Neuertheles a seruaunt / one of the gees dyd take
And pryuely hydde it / agaynst iustyce and ryght
Unknowynge to Werburge / suche bybye to make
The bydes departed / moost glad to take theyr flyght
from theyr tender Judge / but whan they sawe in sight
One of theyr felawes / taken frome theyr company
The sayd great nombre / of gees retourned hastily.

They flewe ouer / this blessed byrgyns hall
Werburge.

i.iii.

Mourninge and waylynge / after theyr entent
And wolde not departe / but fast on her dyd call.
yet they durst not lyght / for drede of her comaundment
But in theyr maner & kynde they sayd / o swete president
Why suffer ye suche wychednes / done for to be
Anendes our felawe / agaynst all ryght and charyte.

Merburge went fyrt / to knowe wherfore and why
These byrdes retourned / so hastely certayne
By grace she perceyued / the cause of it truly
And tryed out the truthe / of all the mater playne
She restaured the byrde / to his selyshyp agayne
And gaue them a lesson / or they went her fro
How they shulde prayse / theyr maker and sufferayne
Sayenge (benedicite volucres celi domino)

But as Wyllyam Malysbury / sheweth expresse
The goos that was taken / and stolen afore away
Was rosted and eten / the same nyght doubtlesse
So whan it was asked / for hyon the other day
The bare bones were brough / after this lady beray
And there by the vertue / of her benedyccion
The byrde was restaured / and flewe away full soone.

Certaynly frome that tyme / vnto this present day
As all the people knowe / dwellynge about Medon
The foresayd wyld gees / attempten by no way
To hurte theyr fruytes / ne lyght in that possessyon
No merueyll it is / remembrynge the deuocyon
And true loue she had / to god omnyppotent
For vnto vertue / all thyng is obedyent.

¶ How a tyrant without pite punyſhyng an Inno-
cent was punyſhed / & after made hole. Ca. xrb.

Further to declare / the pacience and humylyte
And the ſynguler grace / grounded in this abbas
As in the true legende / playnly ye may ſe
We ſhall parte rehers / to augment your ſolas
Merburge had a ſeruaunte / whiche named was
Alnotus a man / of meke conuerſacyon
Knownen by his merytes / after due probacyon.

Also a baylyſe ſhe had / a cruell tyrant
Whiche piteouſly punyſhed / without reaſon
And wounded greuouſly / Alnot her ſeruaunt
Without any greuance / at the place of Medon
Merburge for pite / and great compaſſyon
Afore this caryte / kneled on her knee
Prayenge hym to ceaſe / for loue of the trynyte.

Sayenge why does thou punyſhe / this innocent
Causeles without mercy / whiche I byleue playne
Is more acceptable / to our lorde omnyppotent
Than many other be / for his mekenesse certayne
The baylyſe at her prayer / wolde not refrayne
But punyſhed hym ſtyll / in his fury and pryde
Tyll the vengauce of god / fell on hym that tyde.

Incontynente his heed / his necke / and his face
Were tourned backwarde / lyke a perſone monſtruous
Contrary to nature / for his great trespase
Crucpate with ſorowe / and peynes hyduous
Contynually increaſynge / to beholde piteous
Merburge. i.iiii.

At the last remembered / of the best remedy
fell prostrate to the fete / of Werburge his lady.

And cryed vpon her / with woofull chere
Weppynge / lamentynge / his great iniquyte
Say louely lady / and maystres moost dere
Helpe me swete abbelle / in this necessyte
I haue offended god / now pray for me
And I wyll neuer / endurynge all my lyfe
Dyplease no more / man / mayde / ne wyfe.

When Werburge consydered / his great contrycyon
His woofull herte / and lamentable crye
Upon hym she had / tender compassyon
Beholdynge his greuaunce / and tender agony
Good brother she sayd / who so wyll haue mercy
Must be mercyable / as in prouerbe wyrtten is
Who is without mercy / of mercy shall mys.

Call vnto mynde / thy owne wycked dede
In punysshynge this poore man / without offence
To se his punysshment / my herte sore dyd blede
I kneled afore thy fete / desyrynge indulgence
Thou toke no regarde / to my prayer ne presence
Wherefore the Justyce / of god almyghty
Upon the is fallen / for thy synne todayly.

When she had ended / her ghostly exortacyon
Percepyng hym penytent / with great humylyte
Gladde to amende / byce and transgressyon
Anone vnto prayer / she went with charyte
Optyened forgynenesse / of the blessed trynpte

His ffsnamy / reftaured to his kynde agayne
Bothe bodyly and ghoffly / cured was certayne.

This forefayd Alnotus / by fmgular grace
Refused this worlde / pleasures and banyte
Went into wyldernesfe / and machoyte was
Whome theues martyred / to heuen blyffe went he
At Stow befide Bukbydge / buryed was trule
For whome our lord / of his infynyte goodnes
Shewed many myracles / affymynge his holynes.

¶ How dyuers prynces folowynge fenfualyte inten-
dyng to violate this byrgyn bi power / bi myracle were
put to confufyon. Ca. xxvi.

A Nother fygne was shewed / by the kyng of blys
Of a wanton pryncce / folowynge fenfualyte
And his fragyll appetyte / in doyng amys
Entendynge by vyolence / power / and auctoryte
To depyue Werburge / of her byrgynye
Efpied a feafon / to fulfyll his entent
When he was folitary / and no man there prefent.

By force than he began / this mayd to affayle
But she trufte in god / to be her protectour
Escapynge his prefence / caft her facrat bayle
For lyghtnesfe and eafe / to fle from the traytour
The fonne beame receyued it / whiche haged that houre
Whiche myracle fene / the pryncce fledde away
The byrgyn was preferved / by grace that day.

¶ Another myracle / was done in Kent

In the byllage of Doo / yet full memorous
A sensuall prynce / of wyched consent
Purposed to maculate / this byrgyn glorious
Consyderynge her persone / so fayre and beauteous
Carped the season / to fynde her solytary
By power to oppresse / this gracyous lady.

¶ When the tyme was comen / he thought conuenient
After her furpously / he ranne a fast pace
She knowynge his mynde / add vnchast entent
Seynge no remedy / by man in that place
Called to our sauoure / for his helpe and grace
Sayenge blessed lorde / for thy endles pyte
Defende me this daye / and saue my chastyte.

And as she fledde / frome this cruell persone
She ranne for socour / to a great oke tree
By grace the sayd tree / opened that same season
Sufferynge this mayd / to haue sure and fre entree
¶ Wherby she escaped his / wyched tyrannye
¶ Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere
By myracle is bernaunte / freshe / grene / and clere.

Of the sayd oke tree / is a famous oppnyon
That no man may entre / the sayd concaupyte
In deedly synne bounden / without contrycyon
But in cleane perfyte lyfe / who soeuer he be
May entre the sayd oke / with fre lyberte
And nygh to that place / a chyche is now dedycate
In the honour of god / and werburge immaculate.

¶ Many other myracles / our blessed sauour

Shewed for this byrgyn / of his goodnes
Conforte to the people / in sekenes and langour
That to her wyll seke / in theyr dystresse
Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse
By sygnes and myracles / were dayly manifest
To many a creature / with peynes opprest.

The fame wherof sprange / so fast aboute
Notyfied playne / in all this regyon
The people approached / withouten doubte
To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon
And of these myracles / to haue probacyon
By the syght wherof / they myght all glorify
With ioy and gladnesse / our lord god almyghty.

There was no sekenesse / nor infymyte
That mankynde had / nor beracyon
But by her prayer / and humylyte
Makyng for them / to our lord intercessyon
They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon
All by the meryte / of this byrgyn pure
A synguler refuge / vnto euery creature.

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language
To blynde theyr syght / to dese theyr herynge
To halte and lame people / helthe in euery age
By deuyne grace / and her ghostly luyng
The people approachynge / nygh to her in dwellynge
By callynge to her / in the name of Ihesu
Had theyr petycyon / by her synguler vertu.

Some other that were / fully possessed

In the byllage of Hoo / yet full memorous
A sensuall prynce / of wyched consent
Purposed to maculate / this byrgyn gloruous
Consyderynge her persone / so saye and beauteous
Carped the season / to fynde her solytary
By power to oppresse / this gracyous lady.

¶ When the tyme was comen / he thought conuenient
After her furiously / he ranne a fast pace
She knowynge his mynde / add vnchast entent
Seynge no remedy / by man in that place
Called to our sauoure / for his helpe and grace
Sapenge blessed lorde / for thy endles pyte
Defende me this daye / and saue my chastyte.

And as she fledde / frome this cruell persone
She ranne for socour / to a great oke tree
By grace the sayd tree / opened that same season
Sufferynge this mayd / to haue sure and fre entree
¶ Therby she escaped his / wyched tyrannye
¶ Whiche tree to this day / endurynge all the yere
By myracle is bernaunte / fresche / grene / and clere.

¶ Of the sayd oke tree / is a famous oppynyon
That no man may entre / the sayd concaupte
In deedly synne bounden / without contrycyon
But in clene perfyte lyfe / who soeuer he be
May entre the sayd oke / with fre lyberte
And nygh to that place / a chyche is now ded
In the honour of god / and werburge imma

¶ Many other myracles -- blessed sa

Shewed for this byrgyn / of his goodnes
Conforte to the people / in sekenes and langour
That to her wyll seke / in theyr dystresse
Her excellent vertue / and great holynesse
By sygnes and myracles / were dayly manifest
To many a creature / with pynes opprest.

The same wherof sprange / so fast aboute
Notyfied playne / in all this regyon
The people approached / withouten doubte
To knowe her blessed / and holy conuersacyon
And of these myracles / to haue probacyon
By the syght wherof / they myght all glorify
With ioy and gladnesse / our lord god almyghty.

There was no sekenesse / nor infyrmyte
That mankynde had / nor beracyon
But by her praver / and humylyte
Makyng for them / to our lord intercessyon
They were restaured / to helthe and saluacyon
All by the meryte / of this byrgyn pure
A synguler refuge / vnto euery creature.

To the dombe was gyuen / speche and language
To blinde theyr syght / to dese theyr herynge
To halte and lame people / helthe in euery aye
By deuyn grace / and her ghostly lyuynge
The people approachynge / nygh to her in dwellynge
By callyge to her / in the name of Ihesu
Had theyr pe her synguler vertu.

ome othe

ly possessed

With wretched spyrytes / verynge the mynde
 Of with sekenes incurable / myserably greued
 By her dayly prayer / aboue course of kynde
 Of theyr displeases / they shulde remedy fynde
 And from her departe / in soule with gladnesse
 Whiche to her came / soye in peyne and wretchednes.

¶ How saynt Werburge gaue knowledge to her sisters
 of her departure & how she ordered i vertue her sayd mo
 nasteryes afore her dethe. Ca. xxvii.

This blessed abbesse / and bertuous floure
 The well of clennes / and humptye
 Called to mynde / the wordes of our sauyour
 Rehersted by Matthewe / in his euangely
 The byctory all crowne / of eterne glory
 Is gyuen to them / that be redy eche houre
 Wyfely attendynge / whan they be sende fore.

This terte was euer / in her memoryall
 Prompte alway redy / as a true spouses
 To waite on her spouse / whan he wyll call
 Her lampe replete / with oyle of mekenes
 Synguler gyftes / she had of chrystes goodnes
 Inspired with the spyryte / of prophecy
 Secrete thynges to come / knowynge therby.

She knewe the season / was hastely comynge
 Of her departure / fro this lyfe mortall
 Therefore she ordred / sadly euery thyng
 Within her monasteryes / and charges spyrytuall
 Wyltyng her couent / with her presence personall

Gaue knowlege to them / that soone and hastely
She shulde departe / frome this lyfe transytory.

Afore her were called / the systers of yche place
And were apoynted / who shulde succede
After to be gouernour / ruler / and abbesse
To the pleasure of god / and theyr ghostly mede
Specyally commendynge / vertue as we rede
What meryte they shall haue / of god almyghty
In spyrytuall cures / that done well theyr duty.

All other offycers / within eche monastery
Were assigned by Werburge / theyr presydent
And vnder obedyence / charged full depely
Theyr offyce to erecute / vertue to augment
For the synguler profyte / of all the couent
She gaue to yche place / landes and possessyon
Suffyciently to serue / all the congregacyon.

When she had ordeyned / eche place in charyte
Dyschargynge her consyence / chargynge them all
To obserue relygion / with perfyte humylyte
After her exemple / and doctryne pryncypall
She had perfyte knowlege / by grace supernaturall
Her body shulde rest / in the place of Hamburgens
After her departure / by deuyne prouydens.

Wherefore she commaunded / the couent of Hambury
Wysely to attende / with all theyr dylgence
Upon the ende / of her lyfe transytory
Wheresoeuer it be / to come with benyvolence
And incontynent take / her body with reuerence

And brynge it shortly / vnto theſe monaſtery
There to be tynnyſate / after her deſydey.

As it pleaſeth our lord / and celeſtyall ſufferayne
To ſende to his ſeruaunte / his byſytacyon
The day was apoynted / the houre incertayne
Of her departure / frome worldly heracyon
The meſſanger of dethe / the ende of trybulacyon
Oppreſſed this lady / moost worthy ſame
Ryght at her monaſtery / nomynat Trentame.

She thanked her maker / ſapenge day and nyght
Well come be the byſytacyon / of god almyghty
She called her ſyſters / preſent afore her ſyght
Her entente reherſynge / to them tenderly
Deſyrynge all them / to folowe dyligently
The lawes of god / with honour and reuerence
And to her counſeyll / to gyue fully credence.

Sapenge dere byloued ſyſters / in our ſaupour
O ſpyrytuall chyldren / my derlynges moost dere
Whiche haue refuſed / all worldly honour
To ſerue our lord / with herte and mynde clere
Suffer no ſynne / in your ſoule to apere
But waſſhe it away / by bytter contrycyon
With prayer penaunce / and true confeſſyon.

And truſt ye well your true obedyence
your chaſt luyynge / and wyllfull pouerte
your dayly prayers / bygyls / and abſtynerce
That ye haue obſerued / her vnder me
Shalbe recompensed / a thouſande ſolde trede

Whan ye shalbe taken / fro this lyfe transytory
your rewarde shalbe / with immortall glory.

As for my dethe / whiche approaches nere
I drede nothyng / tho nature ferefull be
I knowe for certayne / who departeth well here
Is newe borne agayne / to Joye and felcye
The chrysten man hath / a threholde natyure
First of his parentes / by cours of nature
Borne to many troubles / and sorowes sure.

By the seconde byrthe / whiche is more excellent
At fonte of baptysm / we haue regeneracyon
By fayth professed / to god omnyppotent
And made the chyldren / of ghostly saluacyon
To auoyde by grace / all wyched temptacyon
To be inherytours / of Joy perpetuall
Folowynge the counseyl / of holy chyrche withall.

The thyrde byrthe / moost ferefull and to be dredde
Is whan the soule / departeth fro the body
To payne or blyss / and leues the corps dedde
To tourne agayne to erthe / to wast and putryfy
In this thyrde byrthe / by callynge aserres for mercy
Our soule shall lyue in blyss / euerlastynge
Crowned with vitory / for our chastytyng.

The swete byrde closed / in a cage a longe season
Gladly entendeth / to fly at lyberte
The prysoner fettered / and cast in depe dongeon
Euer supposes / to be rydde frome capturyte
The soule of mankynde / moost dygne of durtte

Naturally desyreneth / proued by reason
To be deliuered / frome bodyly prylon.

T Of y^r ghosli exortacyon saynt Werburge made to her
syfters in her tekenesse / and how deuoutely she receyued
y^r sacramētes of holy chyrche byfore her deth. Ca.xxviii.

T He day knowen / to her by reuelacyon
Of her departure / by sygnes euydent
She sende for all / the hole congregacyon
And in presence / of all her holy couent
She called for the blessed sacrament
To whome she sayd / with wordes expresse
With wepyng teeres / and great mekenesse.

Well come my lord / well come my kyng
Well come my sufferayne / and sauyour
Well come my conforste / and ioy euerlastyng
My trust / my treasure / my helpe and socour
Well come my maker / and my redemptour
The sone of god / moost in maieste
Withouten begynnynge / and endeles shalbe.

I beleue that thou / for all mankynde
Frome heuen descended / of thy charyte
And was incarnate / scrypture dothe mynde
In the bygynall wombe / of blessed marie
And suffered dethe / to make vs all fre
Descended to hell / roose the thyde day
Ascended to heuen / and our raunson dyd pay.

And I knowlege to the / with pure entent

On Shrophthursday / after thy passyon
Thy moost blessed body / in sacrament
Thou gaue to vs / for our communyon
To be our defence / and ghostly turycon
Now present here / in forme of breed
To Iudge mankynde / bothe quyrche and deed.

O sufferayne sauyour / replete with grace
I the beseeche / haue pyte vpon me
And in my soule / make a dwellynge place
Expulce all vyce / synne and mysery
Defende my soule / frome our aduersary
Saue and protecte me / from peynes internall
And brynge through thy mercy / to iope perpetuall

Thus with reuerence / and great humylyte
She receyued / the blessed sacrament
The seconde persone / in trynyte
In perfyte fayth / hope / and loue feruent
With great contrycyon / as it was apparent
Her herte lyfte vp / towarde heuen on hye
Abydng the wyll / of god almyghty.

She exorted / her systers euerychone
That were there present / in companye
Desyrynge them all / with supplicacyon
To remembre her / sayenge with humylyte
My systers in god / now knowe may ye
My dayes ben ferre past / comynge is the houre
Wherefore I betake you / fyrst to our sauyour.

Prayenge you tenderly / for the loue of me
Wylburge. h.i.

In deuyne scrupce / loke ye contynu
Obyeruyng pacyence / mekenes / and chastyte
Encresyng in relyggon / by the grace of Ihesu
Who so perceuers / in herte and mynde true
Under obedyence / to the extreme day
Is sure to be saued / scripture so doth say.

Also remembre / that all worldly royalte
Honour / ryches / pleasure / possession
If ye contyder / are but a vanyte
Nothyng assured / to trust therupon
Wherefore dyspose you / to vertue alon
Whyle ye endure / in this lyfe mortall
Tyll that ye come / to Joy perpetuall.

Secondly she sayd / sytters If you may
Kept well the order / of perfyte charyte
Neuer declynyng / fro it by no way
As ye haue taken / exemple of me
Iche loue other / and worshyp in theyr degre
So that no murmure / nor dysymulacyon
Be founde amonge / this holy congregacyon.

Be euer lowly / humble / and obedyent
With due reuerence / worshyp and honoure
Folowe the mynde / of your presydent
Unto your heed / and ghostly gouernoure
Kepe well chastyte / that precyous floure
So that no thought / of sensualityte
Corrupte your mynde / to breke bygynnye.

Se that ye vse / dyscrete temperaunce

Abstenynge frome bayne superfluyte
Se that amonge you / be founde no barypounce
Kepe well the degrees / of humylyte
These and many other / examples of charyte
She taught her couent / of synguler deuocyon
How they shulde optayne / to hye perfeccyon.

Chyrdly she prayed / sayenge with mynde dyligent
O blessed sauour / I desyre the
Saue and defende / my hole couent
And theyr monasteryes / of thy great pyte
Frome peryll of peryshynge / and frome enmyte
That all the subiectes / of our congregacyon
May well obserue / theyr holy professyon.

And graunt me swete lorde / throwe thy goodnes
Who so in thy name / vpon me dothe call
In langour / mylery / in payne / or sekenes
Also women with chyld / in paynes thall
May haue remedy / and helpe specyall
And people in pyson / halte / blynde / and lame
By me may magnify / thy glororious name.

Than she requyred / with humylyte
The spyrytuall sufferage / of holy bnccyon
Her soule to conforste / frome all aduersyte
She toke her leue / and kyssed them ycheon
Alas what herte / myght she we the lamentacyon
The wepyng / waylyng / and wofull heuynes
At the departure / of theyr swete maystres.

¶ Of the departure of saynt Werburge vnto heuē at the
Werburge. h.ii.

abbay of Crenam / fro this myserable lyfe / & what lamentacyon her systers made for her dethe. Ca.xxix.

In all her infyrmyte / peyne and busynesse
She bled prayer / and medytacyon
Callynge for mercy / by interyor mekenesse
With weppinge eyes / and great lamentacyon
Remembrynge in herte / our lordes passyon
Commendynge her couent / vnto our sauyour
To be theyr defence / ayde / and protectour.

The peynes encreased / of her infyrmyte
The panges doubled / her peyne to augment
Nature decayed / vnto such debylte
That the sygnes of dethe / appered euydent
The houre approched / after all Iudgment
Wherefore all thynges / were redy preparate
As was conuenient / for so noble a state.

Her spouse Ihesus / hauynge pyte and cure
Upon his spouses / in extreme dystresse
Wolde not suffer her peyne / longer endure
But sende his angels / with great lyghtnesse
To conforthe his seruaunt / in peyne and sekenesse
To dyssolue her wo / and great penalte
And bynge by her soule / to eterne felycyte.

There derknes was tourned / all vnto lyght
Langour and trouble / vnto prosperyte
The day was gouernour / ouer the nyght
When that she passed / this lyfe transytory
Bondage and thraldome / were brought to lyberte
The tyme of Joye / and euerlastynge pleasure

Was appocheynge to Werburge / euer to endure.

A multytude of angelles / byrnyng moost clere
Were redy to gyde / with humble reuerence
The soule of werburge / as truly dyd apere
And brought it to blys / vnto the hye presence
Of almyghty god / moost of magnyfycence
Clerelely releashed / frome peynes of purgatory
To be rewarded / with euerlastyng glory.

This blessed byrgyn / gloryous and pure
In stedfast fayth / hope / loue / and charyte
The thyde day of february / ye may be sure
Expyed frome this lyfe / caduce and transytory
To eterne blyss / coronate with byctory
Chaungynge her lyfe / myserable and thral
For infynyte ioye / and glozy eternall.

With moche honour / these spyrytuall mynysters
Conueyed the soule / aboue the firmament
Passynge the seuen planettes / and all the sterres
Vnto the presence / of god omnyypotent
Synngynge full swetely / theyr songes equybalent
Of pleasaunt armory / of conforste and blys
Salutynge her mekely / with wordes reuerent
Veni dilecta : veni coronabiris.

The thre Hierarches / were redy present
With heuently melody / to receyue this monypall
The quere of byrgyns / mette her incontynent
With great solemnyte / and processyon royall
Presentynge her soule / with myrthes angelycall
To Ihesu her spouse / to whome he sayd truly
Werburge.

h.iii.

Well come dere doughter / to blyſſe celeſtyall
Intra in gaudium : domui tui.

In meane tyme and ſpace / this venerable body
(The ſoule departed) lay whyte / ſtrepght and colde
Semyng as on ſlepe / ſhe had ben herely
With ſwete odours fragrant / paſſynge manyfolde
All ſpyces and herbes / in erth may be tolde
The place was ſo pleaſaunt / full of delyce
Lyke as it had ben / an erthly paradyce.

This forſayd venerable congregacyon
With wepyng teeres / and ſygheſ lamentable
Waſhed the ſwete body / after the olde cuſtome
And dreſſed the corps / with clothes honorable
Prepared all neceſſaryes / pleaſaunt and commendable
To churche ſhe was brought / ſolemply in ſyght
With ſeruent deuocyon / to be watched all nyght.

And as they watched / with due mynyſtracyon
Ouer the ſayd corps / deuoutly prayenge
They made great mournynge / and lamentacyon
Euerychone to other / for her departynge
Alas they all ſayd / with wofull waylynge
Our ſolace / our helthe / is clere gone away
Alas for ſorowe / what ſhall we now ſay.

The ſterre of our conſorte / is extyncte clere
The lanturne of our lyght / is taken ys fro
The floure of chaſtyte / is layd vpon a bere
The myrrour of mekenes / now lyeth full loo
The treaſure of relygyon / from us now is ago
Our ſorowe encreſed / wretchednes / and miſery

Syth thou arte departed / alas what remedy :

Our hertes ben plunged / in great wo and peyne
Our myndes are medled / with heuy langour
How shulde we now rest / frome moornyng certayne
Beholdyng now deed / whylom our protectour
Swete lady thou art gone / frome vs for euermore
Our deedly sorowe / replete with bytternes
For waylyng and wepyng / can neuer ceas.

With herte mynde and boyce / to the we do call
O blessed Merburge / our moost dere maystres
O sufferayne lady / and ruler of vs all
Why hase thou vs lefte / in suche heuynesse
If thy wyll had ben / it is knowen expresse
Thou myght haue taryed / with vs by petycyon
Alas remedyleffe / is our lamentacyon

frome vs thou arte taken / and gone is our solace
The myrroure of vertue / is deed now with the
The tryed flock of truth / and the grounde of grace
Is pyteously decayed / our hope and sufferaynte
O blessed sauyour / vpon vs haue pyte
Sende vs our conforste / by thy great myght agayne
As thou hase reysed many / from dethe to lyfe certayne.

O dreadfull dethe / cruell enemy to nature
With dolefull heuynes / on the we may complayne
Takyng our heed frome vs / to our great dyscomfytur
Nath brought vs to thraldome / wofulnes and peyne
Noth kynge ne emperour / thy fauour may optayne
But he must departe / arested with thy launce.

Chanke we god of all / for it is his pleasure.

THow the hamburgenses toke the blessed body of Wer-
burge frome Trentam by myracle & brought it to Ham-
bury / & of y^r burypall of werburge / & of manyfolde myra-
cles shewed for her merytes .ix. yere after her traslacyon.
Ca. rrr.

THis glorious byrgyn / and moost blessed abbace
Departed from this lyfe / caduce and transytory
(As afore is sayd) the yere and tyme of grace
Almoost seven hundredeth / the thyrde day of February
To celestyall blyss / and infynyte glory
Her subiectes oppressed / with wylfull pensyueneffe
With great trybulacyon / care and heuynesse.

But where werburge gaue / in commaundymment
To bury her corps / at place of Hambury
As was the wyl / of our lorde omnyppotent
Her subiectes of Trentam / whiche had her body
Purposed her wyl / and entent to deny
Prepared to kepe / the corps by stronge hande
With them to remayne / as ye shall vnderstande.

The sayd people of Trentam / watched full dyligent
Her corps fulfyllinge / the obsequyes funerall
Entendynge to auoyde / and frustrate her testament
Gate a great company / by power Marcyall
Closed fast theyr doores / and gates one and all
Made sure yche place / by theyr prouydens
For to kepe the corps / excludynge Chamburgens.

But as Salomon sayth / sentencyously

There may be no counseyll / power ne prudence
Wysedome of man / nor naturall polycy
To derogate or chaunge / deuyne sentence
Proued euer day / by true experyence
Tho mankynde prepose / his mynde to fulfyll
yet god dyspoeth / all thyng at his wyll.

And as they watched / the same sayd myght
stooft busply / to execute they wyll and entent
By deuyne prouydence / passyng mannes myght
Sodeynly on slepe / was all that courent
Theyr company and mynysters / that were there lent
Hauyng no power / for to waken doubtles
God so prouyded / for theyr great maystres.

Chan shortly resembled / into that sayd place
The people of Hamburgens / a great company
With the mynysters of god / people full of grace
And anone by the wyll / of our lorde almyghty
The lockes and the barres / of that sayd monastery
fell downe to the grounde / by power supernall
Without mannes hande / that enter they myght all.

Whiche myracle proued / the people of Hambury
Entred Trentam abbay / with mynde reuerent
And founde there on slepe / all the other company
Man / woman / and chyld / all that were present
They kneled all downe / and worshypped the sacrament
Praysyng our maker / of theyr good spede
Theyr specyall socour / euer at theyr nede.

Her blessed body / from Trentam they dyd take
Werburge. li.

Gladly departynge / out of the monastery
Neither man nor woman / had power to wake
Till they were passed / all greuous Jeopardy
Magnyfyenge our lorde / of his grace deuoutly
Solemply syngyng their songes celestiaall
With infinite gladnes / and comfort spirituall.

After all this done / this holy congregacion
With reuerence / honour / and solempnite
With wepyngtearīs / for pure affection
With lamentable songes / masse and dirige
Buried the corps / of this blessed ladie
Right in the chauncell / of the sayd abbay
There bodily to rest / as her wyll was alway.

All obsequies ended / therto belongynge
As was agreable for suche a president
The systers departed / with clamour and mournynge
Plonged in heuynes / and to their celles went
To wepe and wayle secretly / their hartis to content
Cryngē alas alas / nowe buried haue we
The exēple of vertu / mekenes / and chastite.

And as the history of her lyfe / doth expresse
In a booke nominat / the thrid Passiōnary
After the buriaall of this patronesse
The place was deccrat / with myracles many
Manifest to the people / of euery progeny
Howe god almyghty of his speciall grace
Hath done for his seruānt / in short tyme and space.

For many people greued with infirmite

**Dolorous of hert / and interiour tribulacion
Peynes of mynde / or other penalite
To her graue resortyng / with feruent deuocion
Sekyng for remedy / with great contricion
Anon by her prayer / vnto our sauyour
They were released from peyne and langour.**

**Also by her merite suffrage and petition
Euery humble creature had helpe and succour
To distract persons / was yelded reason
Wikked spirites expelled . were that same hour
Impotent and feble to helth the dyd restour
Halt and lame had passage / the blynde had pfect syght
The dombe had speche / the desse helynge ryght.**

**Women with childe / beyng in great ieopardy
Namely in trauelyng / greued with wo and payne
When they myght nat come / sendyng to her oratorye
Makyng true oblacion / restaured were certayne
To helth and prosperite / from wo deliuered playne
And if they obteyned a relique from the place
The mother and childe / by it founde speciall grace.**

**The deuout pilgrym / the perfit maryner
The true laborer / the marchant with richesse
The carefull poore man / the peynfull prisoner
Were sondry tymes deliuered from wo and distresse
Men / women / child / sekynge with mekenes
This glorious virgyn / with humble supplicacion
Founde soone remedie / helpe and consolacion.**

**¶ A litle breue reherfall of her lyfe / and howe for her
Werburge.**

miracles shewed y^e couent of Hambury purposed to tra
slate her body / by the helpe of Mercyns. Ca. xxxi.

This glorious lady / and gemme of holynesse
Of syue myghty kyniges / descended lynally
A pynces / an enherytryce / replete with mekenes
Refused all pleasures / pompe / and bayne glory
Entred relyggon / professed at Ely
A spectacle of bertue / dwellynge in that place
And a floure of chastyte / electe by synguler grace.

Her honorable vncle / kynge Ethelrede
Consyderynge her bertue / and hys deuocyon
Made her gouernour / for ghostly helthe and mede
Duer all the monasteryes / within his regyon
For the sure encresement / of perfyte relyggon
Foure of these monasteryes / we haue in memory
As Wedon / Trentam / Repton / and Hambury.

When she was ruler / and chese presydent
Of these sayd places / vnder god almyghty
Than bertue and goodnes / dayly dyd augment
By heuenly grace / to the soule helthe of many
And by her exemple / and doctryne ghostly
Kyniges / lordes / barons / refusynge theyr royalte
Entred relyggon / with great humylyte.

Her lyfe and doctryne / agreed bothe in one
Proued in effecte / by specyall gyftes of grace
Many she conuerted / vnto contemplacyon
To prayer and penaunce / whyle they had here space
Her couent and subiectes / within euery place
By her excellent bertue / and hys dyscrecyon

Were graciouſly gouerned / for theyꝝ ſaluacion.

Her dwellynge was moſt at the place of Medon
Where many myracles were ſhewed openly
And at Trentam abbay / of her foundation
From payne ſhe departed to eternall glory
After her entent was buried at Hambury
Of whom it may be ſayd / here lyeth nowe preſent
A princeſſe / a virgin / a nonne / and a preſident.

The deuout couent of her congregacion
Whiche hath long wayled / with ſorrowfull payne
Nowe haue great cauſe to make conſolacion
And gyue due honour to our lord and ſufferayne
Knowynge that Werburge / in blyſſe is nowe certayne
For them all dayly a true mediatrice
In the heuynly trone / afore the hie Juſtice.

Our ſauour Jeſus / graunter of all goodnes
Conſyderynge the mekenes / and pure virginite
Of Werburge his ſpouſe / and proued holynes
By ſpeciall grace / preſerued her body
To his laude and honour / his name to magnifye
Both hole and ſounde / from naturall reſolucion
As her ſoule was clere from vice and corruption.

This immaculat mayde / ſherryng more bryght
Than radiant phebus in the triumphant trone
With the quere of virgins / mayleth day and nyght
The bleſſed trinite with due adoracion
Of perpetuall pleaſure hauyng the fruition
A ſingular interceſſour for her ſeruauntes all
Werburge. Liii.

That here in erth mekely to her wyll call

And though her body do rest nowe in graue
yet notable signes continually be done
Some warned in their slepe comfort to haue
By visityng her place / callynge her vpon
With contrite hert makynge true oblacion.
Whiche thyng continued by space of .ix. yere
With meruailous myracles euydent and clere

The couent consyderynge suche great company
from diuers partes / resortynge to theyr place
In pylgrimage to Werburge / for helpe and remedy
Entended to translate this glorious abbasse
To exalte her body replet with great grace
To her great honour / comfort to eche creature
Pite that suche a relique shulde lye in sepulture

To the prayes and honour of god omnipotent
And of saint Werburge laude and reuerence
The couent and the people by one assent
Desired Coelrede than kynge of merciens
For aide in this case / helpe and diligence
(Whiche thyng graunted) the day appointed was
The clergy and the comons reioised with solace

¶ Of the solempne translation of this glorious virgyn
saint Werburge / and of the great myracles done at the
sapyd season by the myght of god and merite of this gra-
cious lady.

Cap.xxii.

At the day appoynted of her translation

Kynge Coelred and his counsell were redy present
With bysshops and the clergy men of deuotion
Her systers and subiettes a religious couent
The comon people from eche place thider went
With great gladnes / the hole for pleasure godly
The seke and impotent for helth and remedy

The bysshops and clergy stode vpon one parte
Of her holy graue / and her systers echone
Syngynge and praysynge the blessed trinite
The kynge and his counsell with great deuotion
Stode on the other parte in contemplacion
The graue was opened eleuat was the chest
Wherin her holy corps. ix. yere fully dyd rest

Whan this sayd monument discouered was
Suche a suauite and fragrant odoure
Ascended from the corps by singular grace
Passyng all worldly swetnes and sauour
That all there present that day and hour
Supposed they had ben / in the felicitye
Of erthely paradise / without ambiguite.

And as eche man thought by naturall reason
Nothyng shulde remayn of that blessed body
But the bare boones / all els to resolucion
The couerture remoued by the sayd clergy
The corps hole and sounde was funde berely
Apperyng to them / on slepe as she had ben
Nothyng depaired / that ther coude be seen.

Her besture appered hole clere and white
Merburge. l.iiii.

No parte consumed / for all the longe space
Fragrant in odoure / repleit with delite
As at the fyrst season whan she buried was
But whan discouered was her swete face
Beautye appered more white than the lile
Fairt with rose colour / moost faire for to se

Her louely countenanne / so comly to beholde
And her swete fisnomy / with fairenes decorat
As freshely apparant / moost pleasant to be tolde
As at the fyrst day / whan she was tumulat
No doubt therof / for she with synne nat maculat
Asyng all her lyfe in clemnes and virginite
From bodily corruption / by grace must saued be.

The clergy yet serchyng more diligently
Her precious body / and interiour besture
Eleuat the corps full reuerently
With moche worchip honour and cure
Founde nothyng perished in shap nor figure
For all the long space tyme and contynuaunce
She lay in sepulture by diuine ordynaunce.

Whiche famous myracle / notified so clere
The clergy with her systers in ioy and honour
The kyng and his counsell all therat present were
With boice melodious made a great clamour
Praysyng and magnifyng our blessed sauour
With celestially songes / and hymnes full of blys
Deuoutly rehersyng / with all their deuour
Mirabilis deus in sanctis tuis.

With that the comon rude people euerychone
In the sayd churche yarde standyng without
Heryng the clergy syng with suche deuocion
Towarde heuen they cried / and busely dyd shout
The space of .iii. houres / or nere there about
Worshippyng our lord / with voice shrill and loude
In hert myll and mynde / as well as they coude.

After all this done / her blessed body
Was washed and reclothed with vesture precious
By the sayd couent of the place of Hambury
The byshops were reuelshed in pontificalibus
And all the clergy syngyng with voice melodious
Kneled all downe and gaue due reuerence
Honour and worship to her corporall presence.

Thus they receyued with perfit humilite
This sacrat relique hole and substanciall
And layd it in a shryne with great solempnite
Enownded with riches sumptuous and roiall
Prepared by the kyng / and ordeyned inspeciall
Entendyng that this relique and gostly treasure
Perpetually with them shulde remayne and endure

People oppressed with greuous infirmite
Distract persons / halt blynde and lame
Resortynge to her shryne with humilite
Shortly were cured by callynge of her name
Impotent creatures (the legende sayth the same)
Touchyng her tumb / were cured from payne
Whiche tumb remayneth at Hambury certayne

After she was translate / knowen it is well
The clergy to procession / went after to mas
Honoryng and prayfynge / the kyng of Israell
And blessed Werburge / with moche solace
Whan diuine seruice duely ended was
The bishops gaue theyr holy benedictions
The people departed glad to their mansions

This holy sayd fest of her translacon
Was ordeyned and celebrate with solemnite
As sayeth Ranulphus in his policromicon
About the yere of grace .vii. hundredeth and .viii. sothly
The .xi. kalendas of the moneth Julii
Regnyng in mercelande the said kyng Coelrede
Than bysshop of Lichefeld was Hedda / as we rede

¶ Howe the body of saynt Werburge contynued hole /
and substanciall at Hamby after the traslacon by the
space of two hundredeth yeres / tyll the danes were comon
to this lande / or it felle and was resolued vnto powder
The .xxxiii. Chapitre.

This rutilant gemme and specious floure
Hole and substanciall remayned at Hamby
Two hundredeth yeres in beaute and colour
By singular grace / and angelicall custodie
Tyll the danes were comon of malice and misery
Of ire and myschief / as we vnderstande
We meane the comyng of pagans to this lande

Whiche danes by sufferance and dispensacion

Of almyghty god / for synne and iniquite
Punyshted vnpyteously all this region
With a wofull plague of great crudelite
The sharpe swerde of deth / hauryng no pite
Spared no creature / pest no religious
Long tyme duryng in their malice odious

Than this vitall glebe by diuine ordinaunce
Voluntary permytted naturall resolution
Lest the cruell gentils / and wiked myscreauntes
With pollute handes full of corrupcion
Shulde touche her body / by indignation
Whiche pagans were enemyes to our lorde Iesu
Rebels to holy churche vnfeithfull and vntrue

Howe be it the power of our swete sauyour
Might haue continued the body of his tyruant
All that longe season in worshyp and honour
As he preserued of his grace abundaunt
Many sayntes of this realme hole freshe and bernant
iiii. hundreth yeres agon / to this present day
And like so to endure / hole and clere alway.

Sothely to conside / our lorde omnipotent
Glorious in his sayntes / scripture doth specifie
Of his diuine prouidence / pleasure and intent
Some haue resolved / for the greater glorie
Of their resurrection for the tyme truly
Some other to continue without corrupcion
To the true example of his promission

Many holy martyrs / for Christ haue byn slayne

7
The hie preftis of god murdered cruelly
Some with wylde beftes deuoured in certayne
Some caft in fiers on cooles to broyle and fry
Upon many other bydes fedynge openly
Of whom the prophet clerely doth reherce
The more peyne here and wo / the more glory doubtles.

The glorious martyr Stephan (as is red)
In this present lyfe dyd myracles many
Neuertherles / he raied no people that were deed
But after the refoluyng of his blessed body
He raied deed men to lyfe agayne truely
That the great power of lyfe myght fprynge
From iniurie of deth / by our heuen kyng.


Great was the respect of diuine grace
In the body of Werburge / without refolucion
Shewed by her myracles / for mannes helth and folace
But greatt was the hope of the eterne reuouacion
In her body refolued to naturall consumption
Whiche for her merites to this present day
Helpeth all her feruauntes that to her will praye

Therefore worfhypp we with fingular deuocion
The holy luyng of this virgin gracious
For why / all the halowynge of her conuerfacion
Belongeth to the honour of our lorde Iefus
Whiche of his grace hath made her fo glorious
And graunteth his mercy / and of fynne remyffion
To all them / for whom / he maketh interceffion.

Blessed pure virgin / moines and abbaffe

O venerable werburge / mekely we the pray
 Make thou supplicacyon / to the graunter of grace
 After this lyfe present / that all we may
 Come to heuen blyſſe / whiche laſteth for ay
 There to beholde / the glorious trynitye
 To whom be laude / worſhpy / honour / & endles glorie.

¶ The table of the ſeconde boke of y^r glo-
 rious byrgyn ſaynt Werburge.


 If the comynge to this lande of paganes / and
 of the trouble of this lande / and how y^r kyng
 of Mercyens for dede departed out of this
 lande / and how longe ſaynt Werburge con-
 tynued incorrupte and hole at the abbay of
 Hambury. Ca.i.

¶ How the people of Hambury brought the ſhyne to
 Cheſter / and of the ſolempne receyvyng of it / by all the
 inhabytauntes of the countre. Ca.ii.

¶ A lytell deſcrypcyon of the fundacyon of Cheſter / and
 of y^r abbay church within the ſayd cytee / where the holy
 ſhyne remayneth. Ca.iii.

¶ A breue reherſall / of the fyrſt fundacyon of the myn-
 ſter of Cheſter / & of the inſtytucyon of ſeculer chanons /
 in the tyme of kyng Edward ſenior. Ca.iiii.

¶ Of the notable myracle of ſaynt Werburge in y^r tyme
 of chanons / and fyrſt how ſhe ſaued Cheſter from the de-
 ſtruccion of Walſhe men. Ca.v.

¶ Howe saynte Werburge cured and healed a woman the tymes whiche was halt and lame to helthe and prosperite agayne. Cap.vi.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge saued and defended Chester from innumerable barbarik nacions purposynge to de stroye and spoyle the same cite vtterly. Cap.vii.

¶ Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent fruyte to a barayne Woman by synguler praper made vnto her. Cap.viii.

¶ Howe a woman with childe by peyne brought out of her mynde & reason by saynt Werburge was restaured to prosperite and helthe agayne. Cap.ix.

¶ Of a nother woman vnlaufully wurkyng was made blynde and sore punysshed / and by saint Werburge was restored to syght agayne. Cap.x.

¶ Howe saint Werburge restored to helth & prosperite bi. lame & halt persons by singular grace. Ca.xi.

¶ Of a yonge man vnrighfully hanged was thies de lyuered from deth by saynt Werburge to helth and prosperite. Cap.xii.

¶ Howe at the maner of Aptō saynt Werburge refrayned wilde horses from distruction of her cornes. ca.xiii.

¶ Of a chanō of Chester haupng his leg brokē was restored to helth by saint Werburge his prones. Ca.xiiii.

¶ A breue rehersall or cronicle of certayne kyngis/and howe kyng Edgar came to Chester/also howe erle Leofrice repared diuers churches. Ca.xb.

¶ Of the comyng of William cōquerour to this lande/ & howe Lupe was fonder of Chester monastery. ca.xbi.

¶ Howe saint Werburge taught her monke to kepe patience for the greater merite and glozi to come. ca.xbii.

¶ Howe sandes rose bp within the salt see ayenst Hilburghde by saint Werburge at the petition of William constable of Chestre. Ca.xbiii.

¶ Howe Matild / countesse of Chestre cōsellynge her husband agaynst the monasterie was drowned at Bartfowe with many other mo. Cap.xix.

¶ Howe a great fire like to destroye all Chestre by myracle ceased whan the holy shryne was bozne about the towne by the monkes. Ca.xx.

¶ A breue rehersall of the myracles of saynt Werburge after her translatiō to Chestre. Ca.xxi.

¶ A charitable mociō / cōsel / & desire to al thinhabitātz win the cōntie palatin of Chest for y^e monastori. ca.xxii.

¶ A litle orison or prayer to y^e blessed virgin saint Werburge by the translatour of this warke. Ca.xxiii.

¶ A short conclusion of this litle werke to the reders by the translatour. Ca.xxiiii.

C The prologe of the translatour of this lytell
treatyse in the seconde boke.

Now whan we consyder / with mynde delygent
The merueylous maners / & synguler condycion
Of the comyn people / symple and necllygent
Whiche without lytterature / and good informacyon
Ben lyke to Brute beestes / as in comparyson
Rude / wyld / and boystous / by a prouerbe certan
Good maners and conyng / maken a man.

Saynt Paule sayth / He wyng to the Romans
How all thyng wyten / in holy scripture
Is wyten for our doctryne / and ghostly ordynans
For our great conforte / and endeles pleasure
All thyng is knowen playnly / by lytterature
Morall bertues / be noted by it full playne
Frome vyce and necllygence / to abstayne certayne.

What were mankynde / without lytterature
Full lytell worthy / blynded by ignoraunce
The way to heuen / it declareth ryght sure
Thugh perfyte leryng / and good perseueraunce
By it we may be taught / for to do penaunce
Whan we transgresse / our lordes commaundment
It is a swete cordyall / for mannes entent.

How shulde the seven / scyences lyberall
Haue ben preserued / vnto this day
The wysdome / of the phylosophers all
But alone by leryng / it is no nay
The notable actes / of our fathers I say

(yf litterature were nat) myght nat nowe be tolde
For auncient histories and cronycles olde

The lawe of ciuile / and of holy canon
By study be preferred with moche honour
To execute iustice / and for due reformation
The most blessed doctrine of our sauour
The actis of the apostoles / with the doctours four
Be preferred by wytyng / and put in memorie
With the lyues of saintes many a noble storie

Of whiche histories we purpose speciall
To speke of saint Werburge / vnder your protection
Delaryng the ende of her lyfe historiall
As we haue begon / and made playne mencion
In the fyrst volume by breue compilacion
There playnly descriuynge her liniall discens
Of .iiii. myghty kyngdomes by true experience

Also we haue shewed in the sayd littel boke
Her goodly maners / and vertuous disposicion
Of her yonge age / who so lyst thereon to loke
And howe her bretherne suffred martyrdome
Of her fathers realme a litell descripcion
Howe she was professed in the place of Ay
Of her conuersacion within the sayd monastery

After for her vertue / howe she was made abbasse
Of diuers monasteries flouryng in vertue
And of the great miracles whiche there done was
For her great charite / by the grace of Jesu
Howe diuers of her kynrede dyd clerely excheue
Werburge. m.i.

All worldly pleasures and honours transitory
Professynge obedience at the place of Ely

Also we haue shewed vnder your licence
Of her departure from this lyfe mortall
And of her sepulture at the place of Hamburgence
The manyfolde myracles shewed by grace supernall
The wofull lamentacion of her sisters all
And howe after .ix. yere of her translation
By diuine ordinaunce miracles were done

We humble require you of your charite
To this seconde abstract to graunt pardon
Consyderynge we omytte whilom the historie
And speke of cronicles / makynge a digression
It is of no ignoraunce / nor presumption
But to enlarge the mater and sentence
To gladden the auditours / and moue their diligence

In our seconde booke expresse nowe wyll we
Under your licence and speciall tuicion
Of this blessed virgin / flourynge in chastite
Why and wherfore she came to Chestre towne
Principally by miracle / and diuine prouision
And howe for synne / vice / and wykednes
Danes oppressed this lande with wretchednes

And howe she was receyued at Chestre citie
Of the fyrst foundacion of towne and the place
Of the great myracles there shewed openlie
To chanyons and monkes / by singular grace
Unto euery creature in extreme case

Howe Werburge delyuered the towne from enmite
from dreadfull fire / and plages of miserye

Also encronicled foloweth here expresse
A bryfe compilacion of kyng Edwardes senour
Of kyng Ethelstan / the great worthynes
Of humble kyng Edgar regnyng as emperour
Of his comyng to Chestre / of his great honour
And howe Erle Leofrice repared of his charite
The mynstre of Werburge gyuyng therto liberte

Of the seconde foundation of the sayd monastery
from secular chanons to monkes religious
Soone after the conquest sayth the historye
By the erle of Chestre nominat Hug. Lupus
With counsell and helpe of blessed Anselmus
And of the great compas of the sayd abbay
Enuired with walles myghty to assaye

Howe Ric^e erle of Chestre by myracle ryght
Was preserued from daunger of Wallshemen
And howe he was drowned about mydnyght
Purposyng to distroye the monastery certen
Celestiall signes were shewed to men and women
To children and innocentes by singular grace
Of blessed Werburge patronesse of the place

These miracles specified / and many other mo
This virgin shewed within Chestre cite
Whiche at this tyme we let ouer go
Lest to the reders tedious it shulde be
Almyghty god both one two and thre
Werburge.

Sende vs theyr grace to make a good ende
Helpe lady Merburge this warke to amende

Of the comyng of cruell pagans to this lande / and
howe saint Merburge longe lyenge hole and incorrupt
at Hambury. than was resolved to powder. And howe
the kynge of merciens was chased from his lade. Ca.i.

Afore the comyng of danes to this lande
Merueilous signes were shewed in syght
To conuert the people (as we vnderstande)
Sterres in the heuen shynyng full byght
Byuerly mouryng apperyng day and nyght
Kennynge in the ayre dreedfull to beholde
By longe continuance sayth the story olde

flamyng fire / dragons in the ayre fleyng
Chondryng / and layth / erth quake moost terrible
With many other signes / as cometis blasynge
Were seen in the ayre / to nature horrible
Upon clothynge of people bloody dropes odible
Euydently appered : the yere of grace
vii. hundreth. lxxxvi in many a place

By whiche sayd signes wonderfull to se
Two plages of pestilence folowed incontinent
The first was great derthes hungre and pouerte
The seconde was the greuous and sore punysshement
Of the cruell danes cursed and fraudulent
Whiche trouble began the .iiii. yere of Brictius
Kynge of west saxon / saith maister Alfridus.

The thynde yere folowynge these signes in certen
Danes and Norwaies enterprised this lande
In the north partie . an host of armed men
Whiche cruelly spoiled and distroied holy Ilande
With Cynmouth abbay / and all that myght be sonde
Drowned and slewe the people euerychone
Brenned churches / townes / spared no religion

In short tyme after the prenominate pagans
At tamylmouth reentred this realme agayne
Destroyed many cites by their myghty ordynaunce
Oppressed London / Canturbury by power certayne
The kynge of Merciens to escape was fayne
Kynge Adoulfus made the danes a batell
To whiche kynge by grace the victorie befell

yt ye wyll consydre the cause wherfore and why
Our lorde suffred pagans to punyssh the this region
The treuth was this : for synne specially
for in the primatiue churche / with great perfection
Kynge / quienes / dukes entred religion
Professed obedient chaste without propurte
Vertue to encrease / true loue and charite

That tyme was iustice ministred with mercy
True loue and amite founde in euery place
Dissemblacion / pride and fals enuye
Durst nat appere in halle nor in palace
Extorcion pollynge opteyned no grace
The commaundementes of god were obserued a ryght
Charite was seruent / encreasynge day and ryght
Merburge. m.iii.

By proces of tyme / as sayth myn auctour
Throug great possession / power / and liberte
Vertue decreased in holy church day and hour
Holy religion decayed pitiousle
Charite was colde / iustice and equite
Extorcion discepte were bled euery day
Couetise / pride / lechery were ryued alway

Therefore our lorde of his great ryghtwisnes
Suffred cruell people to entre this region
A scourge to correct synne and wykednes
Like a swarme of bees from dyuers nacion
Whiche had no pite mercy nor compassion
Danes Gotes Norwayes and scottes also
Pictes and the wandeles with mony other mo

These foresayd fearfull and cruell nacions
Most cruell pagans dyd great persecucion
From the begynnyng of Adelwlf, kyng of westsaxons /
Tyll the comynge of normans vnto this region
The space enduryng by full computacion
Two hundreth yeres complet .xxx. also
With the swerde of vengeaunce fire and moche mo

The yere of our lorde .M.C.C. fyfty and one
At Camplmouth arriued a great hoost of pagans
With .iii. hundreth ships and .i. men of armes echone
Whiche destroyed Dower / and put the land to greuous
Agayne Bernulphus the kyng of Mercians
The paynyms perswyled / and caused his hoost to fle
Whiche fortune enforced them more bolder to be. ...

But the yere of grace .D.C.C. five and sixtie
The greattest noumbe of the pagans all
biii. kynges entred this realme by victorie
Norwaies / gootes / Mandels / danes in especiall
With many other nacions within in generall
Kyng Hingwar and Hubba than came to this lande
Whiche slewe saint Edmund kyng of Estenglande

The cruell paynymys and tyrantes moost furious
Repleit with malice / pride / and enuye
Seruauntes to satan and ministres malicious
Purposed to desolate holy churche wychedly
Brenned monasteries and spoiled utterly
Many churches chapels of a mortall hate
Slewe religious men and nonnes dyd violate

The people were punysshed in euery place
To olde like and impotent they shewed no mercy
Ponge soukyng children coude fynde no grace
Wydowes and wyues were put to vilany
Maydens were corrupt / and slayne chaunfully
So all this realme endured confusion
Put to greuous peyne / deth / and affliction

After these infidels had ben at London
And there accomplished theyr cruell entent
They soone proceded towarde Lincoln region
From thens directly with hasty iugement
To the realme of Merceis noble and auncient
Right vnto Repton where the kyng lay
Robbing and spoilyng all in theyr way

This kynge of Mercelande called Burdredus
Reignyng .xxii. yere vpon the merciens
Was clerely expelled by the pagans furious
And went vnto Rome with pure conscience
Where he is buried by diuine prouidence
Whiche kyng was cosyn by discent liniall
To blessed Werburge so glorious and pudicall

This gracious virgin and preelect abbasse
Buried at Hambury (as is sayd before)
Continued incorrupt and hole in that place
In vesture and body .ii. hundreth yere and more
But whan the danes came With suche rigour
To Repton abbay / than she was resolved
And of deuocion full richely shyned

¶ Howe the people of Hambury brought the shryne to
Cheestre / and of the solempne receyvyng of it by all the in
habitauntes of Cheesthyre. Cap.ii.

In meane tyme the danes pitously destroyed
The monasteries of Werburge / Trenta & Medo
As they many other places had euyl oppressed
In the north and east part of this region
The kyngdome of Kent suffred lyke punicion
The Isle of Wyght endured moche turment
So dyd the Westmarches / for punysshement

The people of Hambury Wysely consyderyng
The comyng of danes vnto Repton
And of the departure of Burdred theyr kyng
Howe all Englande was in great affliction

And howe they were next to endure punicion
Whiche forsayd Repton was distaunt from Hambury
The space of .v. mile sayth the history

The Hamburgent With all the comons and clergy
Dredynge full sore the pagans flagellacions
Of their lyues desperate / but for the shyne specially
To our blessed sauour made dayly inuocacions
With bigils prayers and feruent meditacions
To preserue the countrey / the relique / the shyne
From daunger of enmite and miserable rupne

As they continued in cotidian prayer
The best remedie sekynge for to fynde
To auoide heracion and all greuours daunger
Of theyr great ennemies cursed and bnhynde
The holy goost inspired theyr mynde
To take the shyne with great humilite
And bynge it to Chestre from perill and enmyte

They toke this riall relique of reuerence
With great mekenes deuocion and seruour
Through the grace of god theyr helpe and defence
Came towarde Chester with diligence and honour
A place preordinat by our sauour
Where her body shulde rest and worshipped be
Magnified with miracles next our ladie

¶ When the clergie of Chestre and the citezens
Herde tell of the comynge of this noble abbasse
They made preparacion and great diligence
In theyr best maner worship and solace
Wierburge. n.i.

To mete this relique of singular grace
The great estates / and rulers of the countray
Were redy to honour saint Werburge that day

First was ordeyned a solemne procession
With crosse / and baners / and surges clere lyght
The belles were tolled for ioye and deuotion
The ministres of god in coopes redy dight
With censours of siluer / to encense her body right
All prestis and clerkes redy to say and synge
Proceeded in orde / this holy virgin prayng

Next to the clergie approached in degree
The lordes of the wyre knyghtes barons all
With feruent deuotion / prayng the trinite
Whiche sent to them suche comfort spirituall
The citezens ensued with gladnes cordiall
With bokes and beades / magnifieng our maker
For this great treasure to kepe them from daunger

Venerable virgins next sette in orde clere
With lilies in theyr handes / coronate with chastite
Good widowes and wyues appoynted well were
Gyvinge true thankes vnto this virgin fre
Nex them assemble all the commonte
In all goodly maner dyuisid by discrecion
Prayng saynt Werburge with humiliacion

When they approached to her hie presence
And comon were afore this relique most riall
They kneeled all downe with mycle reuerence
Salutinge the wyne with honour victoriall

Magnifyng With melodye and tunys muscally
This glorious virgin / nothyng done amys
Sengynge Te deum to the kyng of blyss

The lordes / the citezins / and all the commons
Aekely submytted themselfe to the thyne
With manyfolde prayes and humble supplicacions
With interior loue / and morall discipline
Trustyng all in her to saue them from ruyne
From greuous daunger / and cruell enmite
By her intercession vnto the trinite

They gaue due thanks vnto this abbasse
Deuoutly sayenge knelyng vpon kne
Welcome swete lady replet with grace
The floure of mekenes / and of chastite
The cristall of clemmes and virginite
Welcome thou art to vs everychone
A speciall comfort for vs to trust vpon

Welcome swete princeesse / kynges doughter dere
Welcome faire creature / and rose of merciens
The diamonde of dignite / and gême of shenyng clere
Virgin and moyniaill of mycle excellence
Welcome holy abbasse of hie preeminence
The rutilant saphire of syncerite
Welcome swete patronesse to Chestre cite

Thou art our refuge / and singular succour
Our sure tuicion next to the trinite
Our speciall defence at euery hour
To releue thy seruauntes in all necessite

Merburge.

n.ii.

Thou art our solace and helpe in eche degre
Our ioye / trust / and comfort / and goosly treasure
Welcome to this towne for euer to endure

¶ Agaynst her comynge into Chestre cite
The stretes were strawed with flours fragrant
The mancions and halles edified rialle
Were hanged with arras precious and pleasaunt
Torches were caried on eche syde flagrant
Also ouer the shryne was prepared a canaby
Of cloth of golde and tissewe riche and costly

Thus with great worship decour and dignite
Of all the clergie lordis and citezens
She was receyued with great humilite
Into the cite with humble reuerence
The clergie syngyng with mycle diligence
The comons prayeng with loue seruent
Folowyng this relique after their entent

In procession they passed all in to the towne
With ioye and great gladnes ye may besure
In orde togyther in charite and deuocion
Praylyng our sauour and this virgin pure
They brought full solemple with goosly peasure
This riall relique to the moost noble place
Within all the cite as our lordes wyll was

This seconde transacion of this virgin bright
From Hambury abbay vnto Chestre cite
Was celebrate with ioye and gladnes full right
The yere of our saueour in his humanite

biii. hundreth complet .b. and seuentie
Alured regned than kyng of this region
Victorious and liberall / coronate at London

This kyng deuyled in .iiii. partes his richesse
One parte to the poore the seconde to religion
One thynde part to scholers / the fourth to bild churches
And of a day naturall / he made triū diuision
viii. houres to rede and praye with feruent deuotion
viii. houres occupied with businesse naturall
And other .biii. houres to rule his realme riall

henric .li°.b.

Nobilitas innata tibi probitas honorem
Armipotens Aluredē dedit / probitasq; laborem :
Perpetuumq; labor nomen : cui mixta dolori
Gaudia semper erant : spes semper mixta timori.
Si modo victus erat / ad crastina bella parabat
Si modo victor erat / ad crastina bella pauebat
Jam post transactos regni viteq; labores /
Christe ei sit vera quies / sceptrumq; perenne.

¶ A litel description of the foundation of Chestre / and
of the abbay church within the sayd cite / where y^r holy
myne by grace remayneth. Cap.iii.

Two cites of legions in cronicles we fynde
One in south Wales / in the tyme of Claudius
Called Caerulka / by britons had in mynde
Orels Caerleon / burylded by kyng Belinus
Where somtyme was a legion of knyghtes chivalrous
This cite of legions was whilom the byllhops se
Unto all south wales / nominat Wenedocie
Werburge. n.iii.

Another cite of legions we may fynde also
In the west part of Englande / by the water of Dee
Called Caerlleon of britons longe ago
After named Chestre by great auctorite
Julius the emperour sende to this sayd cite
A legion of knyghtes for to subdue Irelande
Like wyse dyd Claudius (as we vnderstande)

The founder of Chestre / as sayth Policronicon
Was Leon Bauer / a myghty stronge gyaunt
Whiche buylde caues and dongions many one
So goodly buyldyng / propre ne pleasaunt
But the Kyng Leil a briton sure and baliaunt
Was founder of Chestre by pleasaunt buyldyng
And of Caerleil also / named by the kyng

Ranulphus in his cronicle yet doth expresse
The cite of Chestre edified for to be
By the noble romans prudence and richesse
Whan a legion of knyghtes was sende to the cite
Rather than by the wysdome of Britons or policie
Obiectyng clere agaynst the britons fundacion
Whiche auctour resteth in his owne opinion.

A. gratie. lxx.

Kyng Marius a byton regnyng in prosperite
In the West partie of this noble region
Ampliat and walled strongly Chestre cite
And myghtyly fortified the sayd fundacion
Thus eche auctour holdeth a singular opinion
This Marius slewe Keodric kyng of pictis lande
Calling the place of his name Westmarilande

This cite of legions so called by the Romans
Nowe is nominat in latine of his propriete
Cestria quasi castris / of honour and pleasance
Proued by the buyldynge of olde antiquite
In cellers and lowe bouldes / and halles of realte
Lyke a comly castell / myghty stronge and sure
Eche house like a toure somtyme of great pleasure

Unto the sayd Chestre all north wales subiect were
For reformation Justice and iugement
They bysshops see also it was many a pere
Enduryng the gouernaunte of brutes auncient
To saxons and britons a place indifferent
The inhabitauntes of it manfull and liberall
Constant sad and vertuous / and gentyll continuall

Of frutes and cornes there is great habundaunce
Wooddes / parkes / forrestes / and beestis of benare
Pastures / feeldes / comons / the cite to auauce
Waters / pooles / pondes / of fysh the great plente
Most swete holtsome ayre by the water of dee
There is great marchandise / shypys / and wynges strang
With all thyng of pleasure the citezens amonge

The pere of our lorde a hundreth fyve and fyfty
Reigned vpon this lande a briton kyng Lucius
Whiche with great desire required instantly
His realme to be baptized of pope Clementherius
Whose charitable mocion was harde full gratius
The pope enioyed / graunted his petition
And sende .ii. doctours to conuerte this region
Werburge. n.iiii.

The doctours by prechynge and singular grace
In short tyme conuerted the greater Britayne
The people confessed their synne and trespase
Baptized all were / forgyuenes dyd attayne
Idolatrie cessed through out this lande certayne
With grace circumfulced and lyghtned was England,
By faith to god professed was all Wales and Scotlande

Kynge Lucius ordeyned / by the doctours mocion
xxviii. bissshops in this realme for to be
And .iii. archebissshops for gostly exhortacion
To reduce the people to bertue and humilite
At London was set the chief archebissshops se
The seconde in south Wales at cite of legions
The thyrde was at yorke all subiect to the britons

Churches were edified in many a place
Here in the more Britayne with diligent labour
Christis faith encreased by speciall grace
Faithfull religion delated euery hour
Diuine seruice was songon & sayd with great honour
True faith and deuocion were dayly encreasynge
Namely in Cheshire by grace continuall abidyng.

Certaynly sith baptym came to Cheshire cite
Soone after Lucius and afore kynge Arthure
By the grace of god and their humilite
The faith of holy churche dyd euer there endure
Without recidiuacion and infection / sure
Wherfore it is worthy a singular commendacion
Above all the citees and townes of this region

The perfect begynnyng and fyrst foundation
Of the monasterie within the sayd cite
Was at the same tyme by famous opinion
That baptym began within this countre
The great lordes of Chestre of landes and auncetre
First edified the churche for comfort spirituall
In honour of the apostels Peter and Paule

Whiche churche was principall to all the citie
And the mowther churche called withouten doubt
It was their buriall by great auctorite
To all this sayd cite / and .vii. myle without
The cemiterie was large to compase it about
But what by sufferaunce and processe of tyme
Many olde customes ben brought now to ruyne

In whiche mother churche of Peter and Paule
All holy sacramentes ministred dayly were
With great encrease of bertues all
Continuall enduryng more than .CCC. yere
In the britons tyme / of blodde noble and clere
Afore the comyng of saxons to this lande
Whiche with apostasie infected all Englande

So after that the Angles / Jutes / and saxons
By fortune of batell / power and policie
Had clerely subdued all the olde britons
And them exyelled to wales and wyld countre
The faith of holy churche remayned at chestre cite
In the sayd churche truely by singular grace alone
Like as the faith of Peter neuer fayled at Rome

What tyme saint Austin the doctour of Englande
Had baptized Ethelbryt kyng of Kent
And by relacion dyd fully vnderstande
That the faith of Christ most digne and excellent
In the cite of legions was truely remanent
In the churche of the apostoles Peter and Paule
He magnified our lorde with thanke speciall

That season there was a noble monasterie
xii. myles from Chestre nominate Bangour
Where religious monkes lyued vertuouflye
Almost .iii. thousande / obedient euery hour
Without possessions / lyuyng by theyr labour
Unto whiche place he sende for helpe at nede
To conuert the saxons (sayth venerable Bede)

Saynt Austin approched the cite of legions
Where the sayd couent afore hym were present
Whom he required to preche to the saxons
The faith of holy churche and baptym diligent
To whose humble prayer / they were disobedient
Obseryng no charite / yet for theyr great pride
Many of them were slayne by kyng Ethelfride

That season the britons remayned vnder licence
Of Angles and saxons within the sayd cite
Tyll the dayes of Offa kyng of merciens
Regnyng in the west marche with great victorie
Whiche kyng expelled by power and chivalrie
All brutes and walsmen clere out of his londe
In peyne of punysshement none there to be fonde

When the said church hauynge great libertie
Dayly augmented in vertue and holynes
Prestis and clerkes payled the holy trinite
And the sayd apostoles with great mekenes
The cite encreased in worshyp and ryches
Churches were edified with feruent deuotion
In sondrie places within the sayd towne

This noble kyng Ossa agaynst the pagans
Of .xvii. batels has euer the victorie
Confederate was with great Charles kyng of Fraunce/
And edified saint Albans monasterie
Of Englande first toke the hole monarchie
Gaue Peter pens vnto the court of Rome
Trandlate to Lichefeld, the se of Canturbury
xxxix. yere regned fully in this region.

¶ A breste rehersall of the first foundacion of the mynstre
of Chestre / and of the institution of secular chanons in
the tyme of kyng Edwardesemior. Cap.iiii.

The yere of grace .D.CCC. seynte and syue
Kyng Alured regned vpon this region
The relique the shryne full memoratpue
Was brought to Chestre for our consolacion
Reuerently receyued set with deuotion
In the mowther church of saint Peter and Paule
(As afore is sayd) a place moost principall.

In whiche holy place vnto this present day
She bodily resteth by diuine prouidence
And so by his grace shall continue alway
In honour worshyp / and mycle reuerence

A deuout oratorie of vertue and excellence
Prepared by our lord / where speciall remedy
Is agayne all greuans in soule and in body

The primatyue gyftes gyuen to the place
Immediately were after her comynge
Of deuout people replet with grace
In the dayes of the forsayd Alured kyng
Of landes and libertes they made moche offerynge
To god and saint Werburge / after theyr possession
Tristynge to her prayer and sure protection

The people with deuocion and mynde feruent
Gauē diuers enornentes vnto this place
Some gauē a coope / and some a bestement
Some other a chalice / and some a corporace
Many albes and other clothes offred ther was
Some croses of golde / some booke / some belles
The pore folke gauē surges / torches / and towelles

The citezens offered to the sayd virgine
For the great miracles amonge them wrought
Many riall gyftes of Jewels to the shrine
Thankynge our lord that hath vs all bought
And blessed Werburge in worde dede and thought
Women and children the mynded full gracious
As testifieth the archebishop Antoninus

Diuine seruice was obserued deuoutly
Euery day encreasynge with feruent adoration
As the feest required / and the solemnite
To the honour of our lord and his glorificacion

**Prestis and clerkes with pure meditacion
Obserynge their dutie gaue vertuous example
Of great perfection to the comon people**

**¶ After kyng Alured / reigned his son
Edward, senior by liniall discence
Crowned the yere of grace .ix. hundreth and one
With worldly glorie and great preeminence
Bulwarked castels townes of myghty defence
Subdued the danes .vii. tymes in batell
Encreased his realme manfully and well.**

**That tyme the realme of mericiens was translate
By the kyng / and gyven to duke Ethelrede
A noble man of auncetre / politiche and fortunate
Whiche married his syster lady Elfede
Doughter to the forsaide baliant kyng Alured
The sayd gentilman was wyse and vertuous
Sad and discrete pacient and famous**

**This lady Elfede duchesse of mericiens
Had speciall loue and singular affection
To blessed Werburge and true confidence
Wherefore she mynded with great dilectacion
To edifie a mynstre a place of deuocion
To this holy virgin for profite of her soule
Enlargynge the churche of Peter and of Paule**

**She moued her husbande with great mekenes
To supplie the same dede of his charite
And diuers other nobles of theyr goodnes
For aide in that cause after their degree**

Joyfull was the duke of the mocion gosse
Glad were the nobles within all the shire
To founde a mynstre after her desire

Afore the holy roode in a table writen is
At saint Johans churche without the sayd cite
Howe that prince Edmund, the thynde son e'wis
Of Edward senior true foundour shulde be
To whom lady Elfele was aunt by auncetre
So betwix twayne was founded in short space
An holy mynstre of bertue full and grace

They sende for masons hpon every syde
Counnyng in geometrie / the foundation to take
For a large mynstre longe hie and wyde
Substancially wrought / the best that they can make
To the honour of god / for saynt Werburge sake
At the est ende taken theyr sure foundation
Of the apostoles churche / ioynnyng both as one

When it was edified / and curiously wrought
And all thyng ended / in goodly propozcion
Than riche enornmentes were offred and brought
Of the said nobles with great deuocion
Temporall landes / rentes / possession
Were gyuen for euer to mayntayne the place
Of blessed Werburge by singular grace

Spirituall ministres were elect also
Secular chanons of great humilite
To synge and psalmodise our sauour bnto
Within the sayd mynstre haupyng a perpetuite

Prebendes were assigned to that fraternite
With townes / borowes / and fredomes manifest
Continuallly encreasynge vnto the conquest

And the olde churche of Peter and of Paule
By a generall counsell of the spiritualte
With helpe of the duke moost principall
Was translate to the myddes of the sayd cite
Where a parreshe churche was edified truele
In honour of the aforesayd apostoles twayne
Whiche shall for ever by grace diuine remayne

Also we may note holdyng none opinion
This lady Cilede of her charite
Of the sayd mother churche translate the patron
Caused the sayd oratorie reconciled to be
In the honour of the most blessed trinite
And of saynt Oswalde martyr and kyng
For the loue she had to hym continuynge

The yere of our lorde .ix. hundreth and .iiii.
This noble duchesse with mycle royalte
Reedified Chestre / and fortified it full ryght
Churche / house / and wall decayed piteously
Thus brought vnto ruyne was Chestre cite
First by Ethelfride kyng of Northumberlande
And by danes / norwaies beryng all Englande

Also she enlarged this sayd olde cite
With newe myghty walles stronge all about
Almost by proportion double in quantite
To the forther byldynge brought without dout

She compassed in the castell enemies to hold out
Within the sayd Malles to defend the towne
Agaynst danes and walschemē to dryue them all downe

After the deth of her husband Ethelrede
She ruled the realme of mercelande manfully
Buylded churches / and towner repaired in dede
As Staford / Warwike / Choumwort / and Shirisbury
Of newe she edified Runcorn and Edisbury
The body of saynt Oswald also she translate
From Bardeney to Gloucetur there to be tmmulate

Where she edified a noble monastery
With licence of her brother afore nominate
In honour of saint Peter / ouer the blessed body
Of the sayd saint Oswald / kyng and marty: coronate
In wiche monastery this lady was tmmulate
The pere of our loide .ix. hundreth and nyntene
Whom myn auctour prayseth in this wordes serene
Henric^o .li. b.

O Ellēda potens / o terror virgo virorum :
Vicitrix nature nomine digna viri.
Te quoq; splendidior fecit natura puellam
Te probitas fecit nomen habere viri.
Te mutare docet sed solum nomina sexus
Tu regina potens / rerq; trophea parans
Jam nec cesarei tant meruere triumphū
Caesare splendidior virgo virago . Vale.

¶ Of the notable myracles of saynt Werburge shewed
in the tyme of chanons / and fyrst howe she saved Chest
from distruction of walschemen
Cap. b.

This glorious Werburge and birgin pure
By singular grace of god omnipotent
Shewed many myracles to euery creature
To blynde / dombe / halt / lame / and impotent
In the cite of Chestre / whan her thyne was present
Like wyse as in her lyfe at Medon / at Hambury
Witneseth the same her true legende and history

Where to the honour / prayse / and laudacion
Of Jesu / the seconde persone in trinite
And of this birgin a speciall commendacion
We purpose to reherse nowe with charite
Under the protection of you that shall the reders be
Parte of the myracles / with mynde diligent
In this humble stile / and sentence consequent

The first myracle / that our blessed sauour
Shewed for his spouses / after her translacion
To Chestre : was nye the tyme of Edwarde seniour
Son to kyng Alured famous of renowne
The Name of britons was chaunged that season
Were named walshe men in the montaynes segregate
Euer to the saxons haurynge inwarde hate

The Walshe men that tyme had ouer them a kyng
Called Griffinus / to be theyr gouernour
Electe by the comons their appetite folowynge
Endurate with malice / couetise and rancour
Enemies to englyshmen / as is said before
This kyng entended by mortall enuy
The cite of Chestre to spoyle and distraye
Werburge.

o.i.

A myghty host disceded from the mountans
Well armed and strongly approachyng the cite
Prepared for batell with them great ordinaunce
The sayd Griffinus and all his company
With his power passed ouer the water of Dee
Whiche ryuer adioynneth to the sayd towne
Betwene Englande and Wales a sure diuision

This kynge layd siege vnto Cheshire cite
With all his great host / there honour to wyne
By policie of warre / encreasynge myghtyle
For whiche the citezens remainyng within
were sore disconsolate like for to twyne
With wofull heuy hartes they dyd call and crye
Upon blessed Werburge for helpe and remedye

The charitable chanons with great deuotion
Toke the holy shryne of theyr patrones
Set it on the towne walles for helpe and tuicion
Trustynge on her to be saued from distres
But one of the ennemyes with great wychednes
Smot the sayd shryne in castyng of a stone
And it empaired / piteous to loke vpon

Anone great punysshement vpon them all lyght
The kynge and his host were smytten with blyndnes
That of the cite / they had no manner of syght
And he that smote the holy shryne doubteles
Was greuously bered with a sprite of darkenes
And with hidous payne expired miserably
The kynge was sore adred / and all his company

Shortly the kynge remoued his great host
Departed from the cite without any praye
And gaue in commaundement in euery coost
Saynt Werburge landes to meynthepe alway
Assigned her possessions euer after that day
With the signe of the crosse a token euident
In pleasynge this birgin / for drede of punysshement.

C. Howe saynt Werburge cured and healed a woman
thre tymes (whiche was halte and lame) to helth and p-
sperite agayne. Cap. vi.

In the cite of Chestre (the legende doth expresse)
An honest matrone dwelled / Egidia nominat
Whiche by continuance / and payne of sickenes
Was made halt and lame / of helth all desperate
yet to saynt Werburge her hart was eleuate
Instantly required with humble supplicacion
This holy birgin for helth / and preseruacion

Anone by the merite of this lady clere
The pacient restored to helth and prosperite
Gaue honour and thanks to Werburge and prayer
Entendynge euer after her true seruaunt to be
And truely continue lyuyng in pure chastite
But shortly she brake her promesse made insyght
Folowynge her appetite and carnall lusses full ryght

She had great riches welth and prosperite
And married with pleasure after her entencion
Where thies she endured her olde infirmite
And thies was cured by meke intercession
Werburge. o.ii.

To helth of body from peynfull contraction
Thus by the merite of this virgin pure
She was deliuered from peyne thries to pleasure

This forsayd Gadgide prudently pondering
These notable miracles with her gosfly eye
Gauē great cōmendacion and speciall thankyng
To almyghty god / with feruent humilite
And to saynt Werburge knelynge on kne
Came to her oratorie and gauē an oblacion
To the holy thryne with singular deuocion

C. Howe saynt Werburge saued Cheshire from innume-
rable barbarike nacions / purposyng to dystrope and
spoyle the sayd cite vtterly Cap. vii.

A Nother tyme innumerable barbarike nacions
Came to spoyle Cheshire to robbe it and dystroy
(Sayth the hystorye) from diuers regions
Harolde kyng of danes / the kyng of gotes & galwed
Malcolyn of Scotlande and all theyr company
With baners displayed well armed to fyght
Theyr tentes rially in hoole heth were pyght

They set theyr ordinaunce agaynst the towne
Upon euery side / timorous for to se
Namely at the northgate they were redy botome
By myght police to haue entred the cite
The citezens dreyng to be in captiuite
Made intercession vnto this holy abbasse
For theyr deliuerance in suche extreme case

The deuout chanons sette the holy thyne
Agaynst theyr enemies at the sayd northgate
Trustyng to Werburge to saue them from ruyne
And shewe some myracle to them disconsolate
For the citezens were of their lyues desperate
Passyng mannes mynde to escape theyr daunger
But all only by merite of this birgin clere

As the kynges were sautyng this forsayd cite
Trustyng for a praye to haue it every hour
One of the sayd enemies replet with iniquite
Nat worshyppynge y^r birgin / nor dreyng our sauiour
Smote this riall relique with a stone in his rancour
Broke therof a corner curiously wrought
Cast all to the ground: than sorowe came insought

The sayd malefactour nat passyng the place
Cured with the deuill for his greuous offence
Roryng and yellyng his outragious trespass
Toke his tonge a sonder in wodely violence
Miserable expired afore them in presence
Satan ceased nat to shewe great punishment
Upon his soule and body / by signes euident

These kynges considerynge this soden vengeance
Amonge them all lyght so soone and hastily
Shortly remoued theyr great ordinance
Departed from the cite with theyr company
Callyng on this birgin fast for grace and mercy
Promyttynge neuer after to retourne agayne
To disquiete her seruauntes and cite in certayne
Werburge

C. Howe saynt Werburge by her merite sent frute to a
barrayne woman by syngular praper made vnto her
The .iiii. chapitre.

A Noble gentilman / a consul in office
Descendynge of the hie and riall blodde of cotty
Elected a spouses at his owne deuyce
A swete faire gentil woman curtes and comly
Dominat Judith / ioynned to hym in matrimony
With whom this lady lyued a longe season
Barrayn and fruteles of generacion

She daily lamented her great wretchednes
As woman infortunate full of miserie
Prayed to saynt Werburge with interiour mekenes
For remedy and helpe agaynst that woful infamy
Desired to haue issue and frute of her bodey
If it pleased god / and this virgin also
Most greattest comfort to brynge her hert from wo

Saynt Werburge appered to her in vison
In white bryght vesture / clere as the cristall
Exprellynge wordes of great consolacion
Most ioyfull to Judith to make reherfall
Commaundyng her by the effect speciall
To go to her churche with singular deuocion
And praye our sauour with humble supplicacion

Also for to compasse her holy aulter
With a linen cloth / knelyng on her kne
And after for to take the same cloth in fer°
And compas her wombe about reuerentle

This Judith was ioyfull / and rose by verle
And truely fulfilled this godly vision
From thens departed to her propre mancion

Soone after this wyfe afore rehersed
Conceyued a childe and had succession
Praylyng this birgin in hart worde and dede
And after the tyme of her purificacion
Of the same faire cloth she made oblacion
Richely set in syluer / well wrought in compas
With many riche enornmentes she sende to this place

After came herselfe bnto the monastery
With many of her neyghbours / ther^e nye dwellyng
Praylyng and laudyng this glorious lady
With cordiall thankynges makyng theyr offeryng
Of this great myracles true witnes bearyng
Departed from the place with ioy and deuocion
All the sayd company / eche to theyr mancion.

C. Of a woman great with childe with peyne brought
out of her wytte / by saynt Werburge was restoured to
reason agayne.

Cap. ix.

In the prouince of Cheshire / knowen it is of olde
A certayne man dwelled / of great honeste
Whiche had a doughter disposed manyfolde
To sondrye vertues / clennes / and humilite
This humble mayde ioyned was in matrimonye
To an honest yong man / of whom she conceyued
And was great with childe / openly perceyued

When the tyme approached of her deliuerance
Tered she was with mycle wo and payne
Continuallý enduryng / with suche hidous greuance
That out of her mynde she went incertayne
All phisike and medicyns were founde to her in bayne
No comfort in erth helpe nor remedye
For her myght be founde in suche extremitie

Her father and mother / and her frendes all
Brought theyr dere doughter with great deuocion
To saynt Werburge churche / requirynge speciall
This blessed virgin / with humble intercession
To helpe the pacient from all vexacion
Promyttynge an oblacion to this lady bryght
When she vnto reason were comen a ryght

And as she slepped at the aulter ende
Most fully cruciat with peynes hiduous
Passyng mannes cure it for to amende
Anone by the merite of this virgin glorious
She was released from all payne greuous
And fully restored to her reason agayne
Had good deliuerance / and spedde well in certayne

Whiche myracle knowen / her frendes euerychone
And all the good matrons of the sayd cite
Came holly togyther with theyr oblacion
To the holy wyne thankynge with hart fre
This blessed virgin of her beniguite
Whiche is so redy a mediatrice alway
To helpe her true seruauntes both nyght and day

C. Howe an other woman vnlaufully wurkyng was
made blynde / and by saynt Werburge restored was to
her syght agayne. Cap. x.

Within the same cite afore the abbay gate
Dwelled a woman / which brake the comaundement
Of god and holy churche / hys sabbot day dyd violate
Unlaufully wurkyng : wherfore great punysshement
Fell vpon this woman with peynes equivalent
Sodaynly smytten / wurkyng full busely
With greuous blyndnes / and mycle miserye

This woman consyderynge her syght was gone
The pleasure of this worlde her helpe and succour
Hauynge to lyue by / small riches or none
Cried maynly out out alas euery hour
Who is me wretche fulfilled with dolour
Alas I was borne to abyde this wofull day
My maker to displease / alas what shall I say ?

She called to memorie with hys discrecion
The myracles that Werburge shewed to mankynde
By grace she repented / with suche contricion
That water distilled from her eyes blynde
Dolefully lamentynge / that she was so vnkynde
Ruthfully was brought to Werburge oratory
Trustyng in this virgin to haue remedy

As she continued in her supplicacion
Wofully wepyng / abidyng the great grace
Of blessed Werburge / with singular inuocacion
Anone she was cured to helth and salace

Werburge

p. i.

Restored to her eyesight / she passed the place
Praised our lord and this virgin pure
Was a holy woman after ye may be sure.

C. How saint Werburge restored to helth and p'sperite
bi. lame and halt p'sons by singular grace. Cap. xi.

The excellent fame of this glorious lady
Dilated was through all this region
Manifest by myracles full honorably
Therefore from diuers partes came many a person
For helth of body and godly conuersacion
Some to be cured from payne intollerable
And some of oldsores that were incurable

Amonge whom there came vnto her place
Sire wofull persones / cured for to be
Halt blynde and lame besekyng her of grace
With humble supplicacion vpon them haue pite
With wepyng treares sayenge / o souerayn ladie
O imperiall princeesse / and kynges doughter dere
Heele our disease by thy instant prayer

O blessed virgin and holy moimiall
O glorious abbasse / and worthy gouernour
O pereles parens and minstre spirituall
O celestiaall gemme resplendent with honour
Praye for vs wretches vnto our sauour
That we may opteyne here mercy and grace
Cured of our sekenes / after to se thy face

Thy name transcendeth this realme swete lady

Thy myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes
Thy worshyp encreaseeth with honour and glorie
Daily euermore through thy great holynes
Shewe nowe thy power / cure vs from sekenes
That by the we may prayle the kyng of blis
As thou hast cured manyone of this

By these meke prayers / in hert full penitent
And many other orisons sayd priuately
Callyng on this birgin with deuocion feruent
For certayne / or they passed the monastery
They were all cured from peyne and malady
In wytnes wherof / and triall as it was
They staues remayned longe after in the place

¶ Howe a yonge man thries hanged vnlaufully Was
thries delyuered by saynt Werburge from dethe to lyfe
and lyberte. Cap. xii.

A Lmyghty god gaue in commaundement
By moises lawe / to his people echone
No innocent to flee by wrongfull iudgement
Nor causeles to punyshe by greuous oppression
Also to beware of lyght suspexion
Wherof a myracle we shall nowe expresse
Done in Chestre cite by Werburge theyr patronesse

A certayne yonge man dwelled in the cite
Honest in maners / and of good conuersacion
Disposed to vertue and humilite
Was arrest and taken of a lyght suspicion
By the officers and rules of the sayd towne
Werburge. p. ii.

Gyltes accused most innocently
Condemned and iudged to deth shamfully

After sentence gyuen / ministres were all redy
Upon the iudgement to do execucion
He was settred and brought to the gebbet by and by
And as a stronge these hanged therbpon
His frendes and colyns for hym made great mone
Alas what tongue myght expresse the wo
They made that tyme departynge hym fro

And as this innocent hang in his payne
He called to mynd the manyfolde goodnes
The myracles of Werburge shewed her certayne
Howe she had saued many in great distress
So whan he myght no wordes expresse
In mynde he required her / and humble dyd pray
From shamfull deth to saue hym that day

Whan all the officers departed were thens
Supposynge the soule seperate from the body
A white doue descended afore them in presence
And lyght vpon the gebbet immediatly
The byrde with his byll brake the rope truely
The prisoner escaped that tyme from deth
Shortly reuiuyng toke naturall breth

Whiche thyng notified so meruailous in syght
The ministers returned / they labour in payne
Toke this innocent by power and myght
Upon the sayd gebbet hanged hym agayne
Thus he was deliuered by myracle from payne

The tortuous turmentours celled their tyranny
Permytted the prisoner to go at liberte

Whiche myracle knowen / his frendes and cosyns all
Returned agayne with glad mynde and chere
The prisoner mette them louyng god in speciall
And blessed Werburge in his best manere
The deuout citezens approched them nere
Went all to the thyne the virgin thankyng
The belles were tolled for ioy of this thyng

¶ Howe at the maner place of Apton saint Werburge
restrayned wyld horses from distruction of cornes put
in by theyr ennemyes. Cap.xiii.

As the thynde season approched to Chestre cite
Many cruell ennemyes in the part of Wirall
Purposyng to spoyle / and destroy all the countre
The people and theyr frutes / theyr corne and cattall
The citezens dreyng to be captiue and thrall
fortified the cite with men of armes bright
Hauynge sure artillarie for to defende and fight

The husbandes of the countrey about there dwell yng
Agaynst the sayd ennemyes mak yng sore prouysion
Brought their corne & cattell / their husold remaynyng
In assurance to be / to the parke of Apton
Saynt Werburge landes from all distruction
Whiche parke from Apton was distaunt a myle space
A prebende to a chanon of her mynstre and place

These Wyched ennemies fulfylled with malice
Werburge. p.iii.

Agaynst all conscience and orde of charite
In no maner wise dreyng the hie iustice
Entred the sayd parke with mycle cruelte
Pulled downe the paale at pleasure and liberte
Put in theyr horses made great distruction
Of cornes and catell of a hie presumption

Merburge remembryng thei great wychednes
Thei malice and myschief agaynst her possession
By myracle shewed her power and goodnes
Preseruyng her seruautes from all vexacion
And punysshing her enemies with great affliction
As she hath done many seasons of this
By mean to her spouse our lorde kyng of blis

When the corne sheuys lay broken afore them playne
The horses had no power any part to take
For why? by myracle / theyr heedes all in certayne
Were bpholde in the ayre / theyr bodyes sore dyd quake
They touched no frutes / wast they dyd none make
Of the principall doers / some raged out of mynde
Some smetyn with palsy / some lepre halt and blynde

Whiche punysshement knowen vnto all the host
The rulers and captens without any delaye
Knyt agayne the sheuys / that none shulde be lost
With tremblyng hartes humbly began to praye
This holy virgin to saue them that daye
Upon a condicion / escapyng from payne
Enduryng thei lyfe neuer to turne agayne

from that tyme furth ther dar^e no nacion

Conſydering the power of this birgin pure
Approching Cheſtre cite to make derogacion
Denmarke Boet nor Galway ſcot ye may be ſure
Cruell danes nor wallſhemen dare nat procure
Wherefore the citezens haue cauſe to loue the place
And thanke this birgin for her helpe and grace

¶ Howe a chanon of Cheſtre hauyng his leg and the
broken was reſtaured to helth by ſaynt Werburge hys
patroneſſe. Cap. xiii.

Within Cheſtre mynſtre that holy place
Dwelled a chanon nominate Alminuſ
Sad of diſpoſicion by ſingular grace
Humble and pacient / diſcrete and vertuous
Liberall and honeſt / gentyll and piteous
And for a paſtyme this was his pleaſure
To hunt and to hauke to comfort nature

And as this chanon rode for his ſolace
On huntynge with other honeſt company
By fortune unfrendly / the more pite was
Both horſe and man fell to grounde ſodendly
In perill of theyr lyues ſtandynge in ieopardye
The horſe downe lyenge oppreſſed the chanon
Broke his leg a ſondre / with blod great effuſion

When by his company the chanon was by take
He fell in a ſwoone for anguiſh he wo and payne
All worldly riches redy to forſake
For one hour of quietneſſe to be had agayne
Unto his manſion they brought him certayne
Werburge. p. iiii.

Where he continued in mycle wo and langour
Abydyng allonly the mercy of our sauour

Coūnyng surgeans were sought vpon euery syde
To cure this gentylman from penalite
But none of them / by wysdome coude prouyde
Clerely to heele hym / and do hym remedye
Thus he remediles / in extreme ieopardye
Prayed to saynt Werburge his patronesse
For helth and remedye / of her great goodnesse

Whose humble prayer with inward loue feruent
Was graciously harde of her charite
For right soone after appered euident
A byrde like a doue most clere for to see
Into the chanons chambr the byrde flow trule
Among the company / and anone doubteles
The place was repleit with odour and swetnes

Soone after the company euerichone
Were sadly on slepe a thyng meruaylous
And afore the pacient by playne vision
Saynt Werburge appered in his syght full glorious
Sayeng : my chaplayne and seruaunt vertuous
Why be ye absent from diuine seruice
Nat doyng your dutie accordyng to iustice

Aa dame he sayd / and swete president
It is well knowen to all the cite
Of my myffortune and harmes euident
Howe my horse almost had oppressed me
Therefore an impotent I endure mysere

It is no feyned cause / that I do expresse
I beseeke you of helpe nowe swete maistres

Saynt Werburge euer piteous and merciable
Upon her seruantes in great distresse
Conforted her chaplayne with wordes delectable
Proued in effect by her excellent goodnes
To his syght and felynge as he dyd expresse
She touched the foote / that sore and broken was
Cured it holly from payne by singular grace

Whan she had cured thus this impotent
Anone she departed out of his syght
The chanon gaue honour to god omnipotent
And to this virgin and lady bryght
Of this godly vision comfort and lyght
All payne was past sekeneſs beracion
Helth was come by playne probacion

The chanon rose by the same mydnyght
And went to mattens as custome was
His bretherne were glad with all theyr myght
Prayſed our lord of his singular grace
And Werburge patrones of the sayd place
Also with honour reuerence and humilite
The bretherne ſange te deum ſolemle

¶ A breſe reherſall of certayne kynges / and how kyng
Edgar came to Cheſtre. Also howe Leofrice Erle of
Cheſtre repared diuers churches. Cap. rb.

After the deceſſe of kyng Edward ſenior
Ethelſtan his ſonne was coronate at London

Kyng of this lande requyrng in honour
With power regalite by true succession
Valeant in chivalry and actes euerychone
Subdued danes / scottes / norwayes / britons all
Optyned triumphe / and dignite imperiall

The fourth yere of his reigne / and the yere of grace
viii. hundreth .ii. and seuenty by full computacion
Guy erle of Marwike by fortune slayne hase
Colbrond the gyaunt / floure of danes nation
The sayd kyng Ethelstan by power and renowne
Thies subdued danes / and slewe the kyng of Irelāde
Nominat prince Anlaff as we vnderstande

This noble Ethelstan was good and gracious
To all holy churche / namely to religion
Ryghtfull in iudgement / liberall and piteous
To his true subiectes through his dominion
To mynstres and holy places had great affection
Confirmed theyr foundacions with libertes clere
Whose noble actes be touched a lytell here

*Regia progenies produxit nobile stemma.
Cum tenebris nostris illuxit splendida gemma
Magnus Ethelstanus patrie decus, orbita recti
Illustris probitas a vero nescia flecti.*

After Ethelstan reigned Edmunde his brothur
Fyue yeres in honour / hauryng great victory
Princis Ered and Edwyn succided eytherothur
In great busines with scottes and danes truly
Next whom meke Edgar / sayth the history
xvi. yere of age / coronate at Kyngston
With peace and quietnes first ruled this region.

In whose natiuite the blessed Dunstan
Herde angels singe with mycle melody
Peace is now come to Englande certain
Quietnes / and rest / honour / and victorie
Of cornes and frutes that tyme was plentie
Danes / norwaies / scottes / britons in euery place
Submytted them selfe to the kynges grace

Science encreased true loue and amite
Vertue was exalted in all this region
Monasteries were edified of his benigne
Endowed with riches / and riall possession
Pl. religious places by famous opinion
Were newly buylded by the sayd noble kyng
In sondry places of this realme standyng

Secular prestes expulsted sothely were
From diuers monasteries with great discrecion
Religious persones repleit with bertue clere
Entred their places cause of deuocion
Charite was feruent and holy religion
The lyues of sayntes were soth in eche place
And witten in legendes for our comfort and grace

Many thypps were made vpon the kynges cost
To serche by the se all his lande about
That no alian entre in no maner cost
By policie and manhod to holde all his ennemies out
Danes / norwaies / scottes durst nat ones loke out
Suche drede all nations had ensurynge the tyme
That kyng Edgar^e regned by prouidence diuine
In progresse he passed ones in the yere
Eche quarter of the realme with his company

To se that his subiectes well ordred were
And the lawe obserued / iustice with mercy
Than was none oppression wronges nor iniury
Debate malice rancour myght nat be founde
True loue and charite was in all the londe

Kynge Edgar° approched the cite of legions
Howe called Cheltre / specified afore
Where .iiii. kynges mette of diuers nacion
Redy to gyue Edgare reuerence and honour
Legiance and fidelite depely sworne full soze
At the same cite : after to be obedient
Prompt at his callyng to come to his parliament

from the Castell he went to the water of Dee
By a priue posturne through walles of the towne
The kyng toke his barge with mycle rialte
Rowyng bpwarde to the churche of saynt John
The forsayd .iiii. kynges with hym went alone
Kynge Edgar° kept the storne / as most principall
Eche prince had an oze to labour withall

When the kyng had done his pylgrimage
And to the holy roode made oblacion
They entred agayne into the sayd barge
Passyng to his place with great renowne
Than Edgare spake in prayfynge of the crowne
All my successours may glad and ioyfull be
To haue suche homage honour and dignite

Also it is to be had in memory
That this sayd Edgar° and his princis all

Came with great reuerence vnto the monastery
To worshyp saynt Werburge with mynde liberall
Where he gaue freedoms and priuileges speciall
With singular possessions of his charite
Confirmynge the olde grauntes by hys auctorite

This Edgar° was nominate in cronicles expresse
The floure of Englade / regnyng as emperour
Lyke wise as Romulus to romains was of prowes
Cyrus to the persis / to the grekes their conquerour
Great Charles to frenchemen / to troians Hector
Famous in victorie preignant in wysdome
Vertuous and pacient / seruient in deuotion

Henric°. li°. b.

Auctor opum vindix scelerum / largitor honorum
Sceptryger Edgarus regna superna petit.
Hic alter Solomon / legum pater / orbita pacis
Quod claruit bellis / claruit inde magis.
Templa deo / tēplis monachos / monachis dedit agros :
Requitie lapsum / iusticieq; locum.

Also from the byrthe of our blessed sauour
A thousande fyfty yere / and seyn expresse
In the tyme of saynt Edward kyng and confessor
As William Maluesbury beareth wytnes
Chan Leofricus a man of great mekenes
Was erle of Chestre and duke of merciens
Son to duke Leoffwin by liniall disceunce

This noble Leofric sayth policronicon
Of his deuotion and benygne grace

Namely by the counsell and bertues mocion
Of his lady Godith countes whiche was
Reedified churches decayed in many a place
Also he founded the monastery of Leonence
By the towne of Herford / and the place of Wenlecence

This erle repareled a noble olde monastery
Euesham ypon Auen / gaue them great riches
Also founder was of the abbay in couentre
Made the cite free for loue of his countesse
At the cite of Chestre of his great goodnes
He repared the College church of saynt John
Endowed it with riches and enormentes many one

This erle of Chestre the sayd Leofricus
Of his charite / and feruent deuocion
To the honour of god / reedified full gracious
The mynstre of Werburge within the sayd towne
Gaue unto it riches and singular possession
Endowed the sayd place with fredoms and liberte
And speciall priuileges confirmed by auctoryte

So the sayd place encreased in honour
In great possessions / fredoms / and richesse
With singular deuocion vnto our sauour
And prayse to saynt Werburge theyr patronesse
The chanons obserued bertue and clenness
Daily augmentyng by diuine sufferance
Vnto the comyng to this lande of normans

C Of the comyng of Willlyam conquerour to this lāde
and howe Hug. Lupe his sytter sonne was founder of

The yere of grace .M. lxx and thescour
 The .xiii. day of the moneth of october
 The duke of Normandy / William conquerour
 Fought a stronge batell / displayed his baner
 Of normans and frenchemen hauynge great power
 Subdued kyng Harold, opteyned all the londe
 Was coronate at London / made saxons all bonde

For diuerse great causes he came to this countre
 First for deth of Alured his nere kynsman
 The proscription of Robert archebisschop of Cant bury
 The periury of Harolde agaynst conscience playne
 The promys of saynt Edward made to hym certayne
 That the sayd William shulde enioye the crowne
 If the kyng departed without succession

A generall counsell was celebrate at London
 That all bysshops sees by helpe of the conquerour
 From borowes shulde be translate to a famous towne
 Within their diocess / to the greater honour
 Ryght so they all were / sayth myn auctour
 Also the see of Lichefeld, was translate to Chester
 By helpe and sufferance of the bysshop Peter

With William conquerour came to this region
 A noble worthy prynce nominate Hug. Lupus
 The dukes son of Britayne / and his syster son
 Flourynge in chivalry bolde and victorious
 Manfull in batell / liberall and vertuous
 To whom the kyng gaue for his enheritaunce

The counte of Cheshhire with the appurtinaunce

By victorie to wyne the forsayd Erledom
Frely to gouerne it as by conquest right
Made a sure chartre to hym and his succession
By the swerde of dignite to holde it with myght
And to calle a parlement to his wyll and syght
To orde his subiectes after true iustice
As a prepotent prince / and statutes to deuise

This baleant knyght with a myghty host
Descended from London to wyne the sayd counte
But the lordes of Cheshhire rose from euery cost
Agaynst hym made batell and had the victorie
Thies they preuayled agaynst the erle trullie
After he optayned to his fame and honour
The erledom of Cheshire entred as a conquerour

He gaue to his knyghtes after theyr desire
Lordshypps and franchises / and great possession
With riche mariages within all Cheshhire
Exalted his seruauntes to hys promocion
Unto holy churche had special deuocion
Maynteynge iustice / commendynge vertue
Deposyng vice by the helpe of Jesu

After the departure of his bnle the conquerour
When William Ruff. toke the regalite
Then blessed Anselme the famous doctour
Wyd viset this lande oft tymes of his charite
Glad to refovrme / and bynne bnto vnite
Where was debate / and mycle diuision

By diligent labour and good exhortacion

**This forsayd erle of his benigne
Interiorly lounge holy religion
Repleit with vertue and feruent charite
Sende for saynt Anselme vnto London
To come to Cheshire at his petition
And there for to founde a religious place
In honour of Werburge by diuine grace**

**Blessed Anselme at the erles supplicacion
Came vnto Cheshire with gladde chere shortly
Where he founded an abbaye of holy religion
A pleasaunt place and a noble monasterpe
In worshyp of god / and saynt Werburge sothely
The yere of grace by full computacion
A thousande .iiii. score .xiii. yere alon**

**All secular prestes / and chanons also
Within the sayd place afore tyme dwelling
Were clerely dysmyssed / and letten go
Religious monkes perfect in luyunge
Receyued were gladly their rule professynge
Saynt Anselme ordeyned Ric^e of Beccens
To be their abbot with great preeminence**

**Landes / rentes / libertes / and great possession
Franches / fredoms / and priuileges riall
Were gyuen mekely to that foundation
Maners / borowes / towne / with the people thall
And many faire churches / chapels withall
Wardes and mariages were gyuen that season
Werburge. q.i.**

To god and saynt Werburge cause of deuocion

Kyng Wylliam Ruff. son to the conquerour
Confirmed the foundacion / with great auctorite
Endowed the monastery with mycle honour
Of fredoms / franchises / also liberte
The place that tyme was made as fre
As the sayd erle was in his castell
Or as hert myght thynke / or tonge myght tell

Saynt Anselme departed thence vnto London
And was made archebischop of Canturbury
To the place he gaue a sure confirmacion
With singular priuileges to be had in memory
Of whom it is written here folowynge truly
Hic vir dum birit extirpantes maledixit
Werburge iura presentia sine futura.

This noble prince gaue of his charite
Riall riche enormentes vnto the sayd place
Coopes / crosses / Jewels of great rialte
Chales / censures / bestures / and landes dyd purchase
A librarie of bokes to rede and syng there was
Of whiche riall iewels and bokes some remayne
Within the sayd monastery to this day certayne

The founder also buylded within the monasterie
Many myghty places / conuenient for religion
Compated with stronge walles on the west partie
And on the other syde with Walles of the towne
Closed at euery ende with a sure postron
In south part the cimiterie inuironed rounde about

for a sure defence ennemies to holde out

The .ix. yere aftrē this riall foundation
This noble founder the .xxvii. day of Iuly
Departed towarde the heuēly macion
Nert whom his son Richarde succeded trulpy
Than regnyng in honour the first kyng Henry
Also the place had their fraunches and fredom
Afore the sayd cite a hundreth yere and one

C Howe saynt Werburge taught her monke and cha-
playne to kepe paciens for his greater merite and glo-
rye to come. Cap. xvii.

After the transacion of Chestre monasterye
From secular chanons to monkes religious
By helpe of Anselme archebishop of Canturburye
Supportyng therto the founder Hug. Lupus
As afore is specified full memorous
A monke there dwelled of vertuons disposicion
Under obedience / nominate dan Symon

This brother Simon his tyme well blyng
Howe in vertuons study / nowe in contemplacion
Howe in deuout pryer / nowe busely wryttinge
Sometyme in solace / and honest recreation
Observed deuoutly his holy religion
Obedience / pacience / and wylfull pouerte
Akenes / meditation / with pure chastite
For whiche examples and signes of vertue
Diuers of his bretherne repleit with enuy
Were fully confederate entendyng to subdure
This honest prest by malice and policy
Werburge. q.ii.

They layd to his charge open wronges and iniury
They punysshed & oppressed hym with great affliction
Dayly augmentyng by subtyll collusion

Dan Symon offendyng no brother at all
Observed pacience / euer callynge for grace
Weppyn lamentyng with syghes cordiall
His fortune unfrendly remediles / in that case
Entended to depart to some other place
Of a scrupulous conscience / seyng no redresse
Was redy to procede plunged in heuynes

Merburge appered to this monke in vision
Brighter than Phebus in his meridian spere
His seruaunt she sayd callynge hym vpon
Why be ye so sad / and heuy of chere ?
Whether entende ye ? shewe the mater clere
Alas he sayd ma dame and patronesse
For sorowe I can nat my peynes expresse

Diuers of my bretherne ben greued at me
Terryng me dayly with great tribulacion
Causeles on my part deserued trile
In worde or en dede gyyng none occasion
I can nat be quiet amonge that congregacion
Therefore swete lady vnder your licence
I purpose to departe in sauynge my conscience

Saynt Merburge pacified his mynde and entent
With wordes of comfort and holy scripture
Made hym be humble in hert and pacient
Thy sufferauce shalbe great ioye and pleasure

And for thy pacience thou maist be sure
To haue rewarde in blis perpetuall
At thy departure from this lyfe mortall

¶ Therwith saynt Werburge departed sodeinl
To the blys of heuyn euer enduryng
The monke was meke in hert and mery
Observed her doctrine this lyfe continuyng
Gave good example of perfect luyryng
Unto his betherne / and at his departure
For his pacience passed to eternall pleasure

¶ Howe sondes rose by within the salt see agaynst Hil
burgher by saynt Werburge at the petition of the con-
stable of Chestre. Ca. xviii.

The seconde erle of Chestre after the conquest
Was erle Richard / son to Hug. Lupus
Whiche Richarde entended all thyng to the best
To visite saynt Minifride in hert desirous
Upon his iourney went / myn auctour sayth thus
Deuoutly to holy well in pylgrimage
For his great merite and gostly aduantage

¶ When the wicked walshe men herd of his comyng
After a meke maner vnto that party
They made insurrection inwardly gladdying
Descended from the mountaynes most furiously
Agaynst the erle raised a cruell company
Bytwxt hym and Chestre lettynge the kyngis way
Purposynge to flee or take hym for a praye
Werburge. q.iii.

The erle son perceyued theyr malicious entent
In all hast possible sende to Chestre secretly
To warne his constable by loue and commaundemt
Wylliam the son of Wigell / to rayse a great army
To mete hym at Basyngwerke right sone and spedely
For his deliuerance from deth and captiuite
Of the wyld walshemen / without humanite

The constable congregate in all goodly hast
A myghty stronge host / in theyr best arraye
Towarde Hilburgher on iourney ridyng fast
Trustyng vpon shippes all them to conuaye
Whiche was a riall rode that tyme nyght and daye
And whan they theder came shyping none there was
To carie all them ouer in conuenient space

Alas what hert may thynke / or tonge well expresse ?
The dolorous greuance / and great lamentacion
That the host made / for loue and tendernes
Knowyng their great maister in suche persecucion
Some wept and wayled without consolacion
Some sighed and sobbed / some were in extasy
Without perfect reason / alas what remedy ?

Wylliam the constable most carefull man on lyue
Of his myffortune in suche extreme necessite
Called to hym a monke there dwelling contemplatyue
Required hym for counsaile and prayer for his charite
The monke exhorted hym to knele vpon his kne
Humble to beseke Werburge his patronesse
For helpe and remedy in suche great distresse

The constable content anone began to praye
O blessed Werburge and birgin pure
I beseeke the mekely helpe me this day
That we may transcende this ryuer safe and sure
To saue and defende my lorde from discomfiture
And here I promytte to god and the alone
To offre to the a gyfte at my comyng whome

Whiche prayer ended with wepyng and langour
Beholde and consydre well with your gostly ee
The infinite goodnes of our sauour
For like as to Moyses deuided the redde see
And the water of Jordan obeyed to Josue
Ryght so the depe riuer of Dee made diuision
The sondes dye appered in syght of them echone

The constable consyderynge / and all the company
This great myracle transcending nature
Prayled and magnified our lorde god almyghty
And blessed Werburge the birgin pure
They went into wales vpon the sondes sure
Deliuered their lorde from drede and ermite
Brought hym in safe garde agayne to Chestre cite

The sayd Wylliam constable came to the monasterye
Thanked saynt Werburge with meke supplicacion
Fulfylled his promes made in extremite
Dyred to the place the village of Neuton
Afterwarde he founded the abbay of Norton
And where the host passed / ouer betwix bondes
To this day ben called the constable sondes

T Howe Matild, countesse of Chestre counselleng her
husband, agaynst the monastery of Chestre was brow-
ned at Barlewe with many other mo. Cap. xix.

After the decease of Hug. Lupe prenominate
Richard, his son .vii. yeres of age
Was elect Erle by the kyng and creat
With counsaile gouerned his landes and heritage
At yeres of discrecion he toke in mariage
The lady Matild / nece to the first kyng Henry
Doughter to erle Stephan (sayth the history)

At his begynnyng he was a benefactour
A founder to the place by landes and possession
By franchises and libertes / ayde / helpe / and succour
Gyuen to the abbay / augmentyng the foundation
Proued by his actes of singular deuocion
Enduryng long tyme / tyll that his lady
By wyched counsaile moued hym the contrarye

It is red in scripture howe quene Iesabell
Ambitious of honour agaynst all ryghtousnes
Peruerted her lorde Ahas / kyng of Israell
To sle Nabath for his vineyard doubtles
Also Athalia / the bible sheweth expresse
Commaunded to flee the kynges children all
That she myght regne sole pryncesse imperiall

Ryght so this Matild, clerely refusyng
The steppes of Sara / Rebecca / and Rachell
And other good matrons : but mutacion takyng
Of these wyched women Athali and Iesabell

Peruerted her husbände by her subtyll counsell
To aske of the abbot the maner place of Salton
With the appurtinaunce by famous opinion

Thabbot by counsell of his bretherne all
Denyed to graunt their propre possession
The patrimony of Christ and their landes seuerall
To the sayd erle Richarde and his succession
Gyuen by his father at the first foundacion
For whiche thyng the erle and Matild, his lady
Hated thabbot / his bretherne / and the monasterie

The erle and his countesse went to Normandy
To viset their frendes and colyns naturall
So dyd the princis / their father kynge Henry
With many estates of the blodde riall
These princis fauored no saxon at all
The erle conminat in malice and hate
Agaynst the monasterie / as a man endurete

Satan sende forth his seruauntes in hast
To infect the erles hert with venomous poison
The bedyls of Belial attempted full fast
The erle and his countesse / to kepe theyr opinion
Detractours flaterers cause of promocion
Trustyng therby to opteyne fauour and grace
Excited their myndes agaynst the sayd place

The erle sore attempted by his gossly ennemy
By wycked people callyng hym vpon
Namely by the counsell of Matild, his lady
Entended to alter and chaunge the foundacion
Werburge

Of the sayd abbay to a nother religion
Confirmed the same sweryng most depely
At his whom comyng to Englande / from Normandy

Chabbot and couent knowyng this great perell
By speciall louers and frendes secretly
Were penyue and sorowfull (it was no meruell)
Their hertes plunged in wo and misery
By naturall reason haupyng no remedy
Consydering his malice encreased more and more
Agaynst the monastery / with wordes of rigour

They had their hope trust and confidence
In blessed Werburge their patronesse
With wepyng eies clere in conscience
They called her vpon in all their distresse
O glorious virgin lady and swete maistres
Mitigate the malice by thy benignite
Of Richarde our lorde / mekely we praye the

Suffre hym neuer to distrope thy place
By wycked consell malice and enuy
founded and dedicate by heuenly grace
In honour of god / and the specially
Protect / defende / and saue thy monastery
Thy landes / thy libertes / and thy seruauntes all
As thou afore tyme hast done continuall

In meane tyme the erle entended spedely
from thens to depart / and retourne agayne
To fulfyll his entent agaynst the monasterye
By the subtyll mocion of his countesse playne

A ship was prepared / all thyng redy certayne
The prync of England / the erle and his lady
Toke shippynge at Barlewe and all their comp

Certaynly they sayled but a lytell space
Whan agaynst them roose a contrarie wynde
The mariners to gyde the ship had no grace
The stormes so great hideous agaynst kynde
On a rocke they ranne / no remedy myght fynde
Incontinently the ship barst all in sondre
The erle and his feliship were turned all undre

No man ne childe scaped from deth that tyme
But one pore seruaunt whiche swamme to the londe
Suche was theyr fortune by sufferaunce diuyn
Many of theyr bedis were neuer fonde
Thus was their power made thral and bonde
Theyr lyues were lost within a lott space
Whiche were cruell ennemys into her place

On saynt Katharins day at after mydnyght
Whan matens were ended / and bretherne gon
Some mournyng waylyng for drede full ryght
Some busie in prayer and contemplacion
Werburge appered to the secristan alone
Sayenge : ye may be ioyfull in god and mery
Erle Richard is drowned your mortall enemy

The same glad tidyng shewed an honest woman
Collyng at the church doore the sayd day and hour
As she was commaunded by Werburge incertan
To thabbot and couent plunged in great langour
Werburge. r.ii.

(Whiche myracle herde) they prayed our sauour
And blessed Werburge / with hert deuoutly
Syngyng Te deum full solemply

T Howe a great fire like to distroye all Chestre by my-
racle ceased / whan the holy Myne was borne about the
towne by the monkes. Cap.xx.

From the incarnation of our sauour
A thousand / a hundreth yere .lxxx. also
On sonday in mydleton / the .viii. hour^e
Whan euery paretthen theyr churche went to
As all christen people of dutie shulde do
A fyre by infortune rose up sodeinly
All flamyng feruent or the people dyd espy

This fearefull fire encreased more and more
Piteously wastyng hous / chambre / and hall
The citezens were redy their cite to succour
Shewed all their diligence / and labour continuall
Some cried for water / and some for hookes dyd call
Some bled other engins by crasste and policy
Some pulled downe howses afore the fire truly

Other that were impotent / mekely gan praye
Our blessed lorde / on them to haue pite
Women and children cried out and waile away
Beholdyng the daunger and perill of the cite
Prestes made hast diuine seruice to supple
Redy for to succour their neyghbours in distress
(As charite required) and helpe their heuynes

The fire continued without any cessyng
feruently flamyng euer continuall
from place to place meruaylously rennyng
As it were tynder consuming toure and wall
The citezens sadly laboured in bayne all
By the policie of man was founde no remedy
To cesse the fire so feruent and myghty

Alas great heuynes it was to beholde
The cite of Trope all flamyng as fire
More pite of Rome cite was manyfolde
feruently flagrant / empeiryng the empire
As to the quantite the cite of Chestre
Myght be assembled this tyme in like case
To the sayd citees remedeles alas

Many riall places fell adowne that day
Riche marchauntes houses brought to distruction
Churches and chapels went to great decay
That tyme was brent the more part of the towne
And to this present day is a famous opinion
Howe a myghty church a mynstre of saynt Maichaell
That season was brent and to ruyne fell

When the people sawe their power insufficient
By diligent labour / wysdome and policie
To subdue the fire / but styll dyd augment
To almyghty god they dyd call and crye
And to saynt Werburge the gracious lady
For helpe and succour in suche wretchednes
Weepyng and waylyng for woo and heuynes
Werburge. r.iii.

Chabbot and couent of the sayd monasterie
Religiously lyuynge in holy conuersacion
Repleit with mekenes and feruent charite
Toke the holy thyne in prayer and deuocion
Syngynge the letanie bare it in procession
Compasynge the fyre in euery strete and place
Trustynge in Werburge for helpe aide and grace.

When they had ended the holy letanye
From place to place procedynge in stacion
Anone a stremynge sterre appered todaynlye
A white doue descended afore the congregacion
Approchynge as to helpe them / a signe of consolacion
The people reioysed of that gostly syght
And praysed saynt Werburge with power and myght

So by the merite of this blessed virgin
The fire began to cesse / a myracle clere
That passynge the place / where the holy thyne
Was borne by the bretherne / as playnly dyd appere
The citezens dyd helpe in their best manere
The feruent great fire extincted was in dede
By grace aboue nature / in story we may rede

The clergie the burges / and the comons all
Consyderynge the goodnes of this virgin bright
With tendernes of hert and loue in speciall
Magnified and praysed our lorde god almyght
And blessed Werburge by day also nyght
Whiche hath preserued of her great charite
Chestre from distruction in extreme necessite

Unto her shyne the people all went
 The clergie before in maner of procession
 Thankyng this virgin with loue feruent
 For her mercy and grace shewed them vpon
 Deuoutly knelynge there made oblacion
 Sayeng full sadly / we shall neuer able be
 The place to recompence for this dede of charite

¶ A breue reherfall of the myracles of saynt Werburge
 after her translacon to Chestre. Cap. xxi.

These foresayd myracles and signes celestiaall
 By diuine sufferaunce shewed manifestly
 Magnifyen this virgin and blessed moiriall
 With mycle worthyp honour and victory
 Playnly declaryng vnto your memory
 What singular grace / worthyp / and excellence
 Our sauour shewed for his spouse openly
 As is reherfed at masse in her sequens

To expresse all myracles wrytten in the place
 In a boke nominate the thrid passionarpe
 It wolde require a longe tyme and space
 To the reders tedious (no meruayle sothly)
 Where we omytte to writte of them specially
 But touched in generall vnto your audience
 To reioyse and comfort your hertes inwardly
 As ye may conside in her sequens

Certaynly it is knowen by bokes expresse
 Sith that saynt Werburge came to Chestre cite
 By the power of god and myracle doutles
 Werburge. r.iiii.

She hath defended the towne from ennemite
From barbarike nations full of crudelite
Of whom we haue shewed with diligence
Preseruyng her seruauntes / and the monastery
As is declared in her true sequence

Also of her goodnes preserved she hase
The sayd towne from fire in extreme necessite
Many diuers tymes to their ioye and solace
Reluyng the citezens in wo and penalite
For it is well known by olde antiquite
Sith the holy thryne came to their presence
It hath ben their comfort and gladnes truly
As playnly appereth in her sequens

Also to blynde men she hath gyuen syght
To dombe men speche right perfectly
To desse men their herpyng pleasaunt and right
And helth to sicke men repleit with debilitie
Delyuered prisoners from captiuite
Passage to lame men / to mad men intelligence
Suche myracles shewed this blessed lady
As ye may vnderstande in her sequens

Women with childe by her had good delyueraunce
Virgins defended from shame and bilany
Her seruauntes were cured from wofull greuaunce
Marchantes and mariners delyuered from ieopardye
Other were saued from hangyng shamfully
A speciall comfort succour and defence
To all carefull creatures sekynge for remedy
By singular grace / as sayth the sequens

No wofull person in payne and wretchednes
Aan woman childe / who so euer they be
Comynge to the abbay with perfit mekenes
Makynge supplicacion to this ladye free
But they departed ioyful and merie
To theyr dwellynge place by her beniuolence
And for their lyuyng had all thyng necessarie
As written is playnly in her sequens

for whiche great myracles and signes continuall
This blessed Werburge floure of humilite
Of the people is called for grace supernall
Patrones of Cheshire / protectrice of the countre
A here next our sauour and his mother Marie
She hath great honour mayse and preeminence
As most condigne to beare the principalite
In witnes wherof recordeth her sequens

This holy abbasse and lady imperiall
Hath ben president in Cheshire monasterie
Theyr trust / theyr treasure / and defence speciall
In mycle reuerence .xii. hundreth yere trulie
And so shall continue by grace of god almyghty
To the worldes ende in hie magnificence
To whom be honour worship and glorie
Euer to endure / as sayth her sequens

¶ A charitable mocion and a desyre to all the inhaby-
tauntes within the countie palatine of Cheshire for the
monasterie.
Cap. xxii.

O ye worthye nobles of the west partye
Considre in your mynde with hye discrecion
The perfite goodnes of this swete ladye
We mean saynt Werburge nowe at this season
Whiche hath ben your helpe and singular tuicion
And so euer wylbe / haue this in your mynde
When ye to her call with humble supplicacion
Wherefore to the monasterye be neuer unkynde

Remembre / at the foundation of the sayd place
your predecessours and forefathers redy were
To gyue for their soule helth by singular grace
Parcell of their landes and possessions mere
To our sauour and to saynt Werburge clere
Redy to offre them with humble hert and mynde
In perfite oblacion with Hug. Lupe their foundere
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

Many helde their landes of the sayd monasterie
By tenure grand seriant / and some by homage
By tenur^e franke almoigne / other by fealtie
With seruice de chivaler^e / and some by escuage
Some by petit seriant / and by tenur^e burgage
As in their euidentes and grauntes they may fynde
Cres maners de rentes / with tenur^e billenage
Wherefore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

The place hath speciall franchises and liberte
Hauynge certayne wardes of landes and mariage
Of diuers gentilmen within the sayd counte
All theyr tenauntes and seruauntes haue fre passage
Within all cheshyre without tolle and pillage

Suche auncient freedoms in their dedes they fynde
Gyuen by theyr founders for godly auauntage
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

The erle gabe the place many great freedoms
Within Chestre cite / whiche ben knowen of olde
With singular priuileges and auncient customs
Saynt Werburge faire / with profites manyfolde
That no marchandise shulde be bought ne solde
Enduryng the faire days (in wrytyng as we fynde)
But afore thabbay gate / to haue and to holde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Therfore lordes barons / ye rulers of the cowntre
We you now exhorde in our sauour
Discretly confide with your godlie eie
The myght of this mayden and chaste flour
Shewed by myracles euery day and hour
Whan she was required with true hert and mynde
In all busines she hath ben their protectour
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Whan your forefathers haue ben in great perell
In ieoperdie of lyfe on see and on londe
Or like to be slayne by ennemies in batell
Or taken by warr^e in prilon fast bonde
Unto this birgin / as we understonde
Whan they called and cryed with contrite mynde
They escaped all daunger / cam whom safe and sonde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Marchauntes passyng with marchaundise

from lande to lande truly entending
If they were taken with cruell ennemyse
Whels were put in perill of perishing
If they to this virgin deuoutly praying
Made supplicacion with humble hert and mynde
Anone they opteyned they humble askyng
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

If any of you be red with infirmite
With sekenes incurable / or other veracion
As wronges iniuries and other maladie
Unto saynt Werburge making intercession
And to her place promysyng an oblacion
With contrite hert and penitent mynde
They were soone cured from all affliction
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

And you honest matrons remembre you all
The goodnes of this virgin full of grace
When ye in trauelyng vpon her do call
Or haue any relique sende from the place
ye fortune and spede well in short tyme and space
And diuers maydens lounyng a chaste mynde
From bilany ben saued by her purchase
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer unkynde

But eche contrap / hire / and congregacion
Some be disposed to vertues generall
And some to the contrarie proued by reason
Following their mynde and appetite sensuall
Haue shewed unkyndnes to the place spirituall
And haue ben sore punysshed / take this in mynde

To all other folowynge and example speciall
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer brynnde

Ther was neuer man of high nor lowe degree
Lorde / baron / knyght / marchaunt / and burges
Attemptyng to infringe their rightes and liberte
Remaynyng in the same malice and wychednes
But if they repent shortly theyr busynes
Askyng absolucion to theyr conscience blynde
Vengeance on them doth lyght doutles
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer brynnd

Diuers malefactours agayne good conscience
Attemptyng to take there seuerall possession
By subtell policy and wrong feyned euidens
By proued periury and fals collusion
Whiche in theyr iniury and wronge mespission
Without repentauns in theyr consciens blynde
Sodenly haue ben drowed a sharpe punyction
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer brynnde

Other haue be glad to alienat the patronage
Of certayne churches by malice and enuy
By a fals enquest for theyr owne awauntage
Defraudyng the right of the holy monastery
Suche euill doers remaynyng in theyr tyranny
Without satisfaccion in their consciens blynde
Lyke wretches expired moste myserably
Wherfore to the monastery be neuer brynnde

Other haue ben besy serching day and nyght
To infringe theyr fraunchis and fridome auncient

By fals recordes oppugnant to ryght
As hath ben proued by persones indifferent
yet they haue procured and sought wronge iugement
Agaynst their libertes in conscience blynde
Sodayne and euyl deth folowed them consequent
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Some other haue be parauenture on late
Studious to disquiet the place the company
And diuers libertes haue alienate
Also tolled their franchis fraudulently
From the sayd place well knowen in memory
Suche mysdoers we moue in conscience blynde
To maende their wronges lest payne come sodeynly
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Suche malefactours confide nat discretly
Howe all suche landes libertes and fredoms
Were gyuen to Christ and ben his patrimonye
And nat allonly to religious persons
For all suche franchises priuileges possessions
Of charite were gyuen of pure conscience and mynde
To god and saynt Werburge with great deuotions
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

Howe for to make a small conclusion
We well perceyue in auncient bokes olde
All suche transgressours / holdyng their opinion
Obstinate in malice indurate and bolde
Some haue ben slayne / some drowned in water colde
Some shamfully hanged rebukyng their kynde
Some wretchedly departed / some cruciat manyfolde
Wherfore to the monasterie be neuer bnynde

A litell orison or prayer to the blessed virgine saynte
Merburge by the translatour of this werke. Ca.xxiii.

Blessed Merburge and virgin glorious
Descended by auncetrie of blod victoriall
Doughter to kynge Sulfer^e / and Dmenild^e vertuous
O sufferayne lady and famous moiriall
With hert and true mynde on the I call
Thou art my succour / my helpe in all distress
Defende and saue me from peynes infernall
By thy meke prayer swete patrones

O rutilant gemme clerer than the cristall
O redolent rose repleit with suauite
Whiche for the loue of thy spouse eternall
Refused hast all bayne pleasures transetore
Honours / riches / and secular dignite
Howe regnyng in heuyn as a quene doutles
Praye for thy seruauit to the lorde of mercy
Michely I beseke the swete patronesse

O sufferayne lady full of singular vertue
Myndyng most religion from thy infancy
Elect to the a spouse our sauour Iesu
Professed obedience at the house of Ely
Where thou obserued the sensualls thre
By grace aboue nature playn to expresse
O pteyne me power to haue victory
Agaynst myn ennemyes swete patrones

O floure of virgins and comly creature
Syngyng with angels in the heuenly toure

Transcendyng the saphir and diamonde pure
In worship praisyng beaute and decur
What tong can reherse thy ioy and honour
Whiche is ineffable for man to expresse
Beseeke thy spouse our blessyd sauour
To graunte me mercy swete patrones

For thy great vertu and hie discrecion
Chosen thou was a pyler here to be
Of diuers monasteryes to encrease religion
By thy godly doctryne and humilite
Exsample thou gaue of perfite charite
Unto thi subgettis as a kynde maistres
Helpe me thy seruaunt of thy benigneite
To please my maker swete patrones

No maruell it was thought thy subgettis all
Were vertuous and perfect in contemplacion
Under suche a ruler a hed and principall
Whose godly example and exortacion
Were correspondent accordyng in one
Thy precept and deed were vnit with mekenes
In this bale misery be my protection
I humble the require swete patrones

Glorious abbasse and floure of chastite
Carboncle shenyng bothe day and nyght
All this region by thy noble progenie
And hy the is decorat vnder god almyght
The presens of thy blessyd body right
Reioisith thy seruauntis in all distress
Thou art our refuge and lanterne of light

Succour thy seruantes swete patrones

**O pereles princes lady imperiall
O gemme of holynes and noble president
Comfort to all creatures in paynes thrall
Reluyng all secke feble and impotent
A myrrour of mekenes to euery pacient
Whose myracles magnifyen thy great goodnes
Defende thy seruaut from greuous turment
By thy supplicacion swete patronesse**

**O noble sufferayne and singular protectrice
Of thy true subiectes by speciall grace
In all necessite a sure mediatrice
From greuous oppression preseruyng thy place
A lanterne of lyght in eche wofull case
To illumine thy people plunged in heurynes
With great consolacion and gostly solace
Howe lyghten our conscience swete patronesse**

**Swete louely lady mekely I the praye
For thy great mekenes and perfect charite
Make thou intercession both nyght and day
For thy true seruantes vnto the trinite
That we may opteyne here grace and mercy
And of our synne to haue forgyuenes
Afterwarde to come to eternall glorie
Helpe nowe and euer swete patronesse**

**A breue cōclusion of this litell werke vnto the reders
by the translatour.**
Werburge

**Cap. xiiii.
f. i.**

With trembling penne and hand full of dede
In termes rude translate nowe haue we
The noble hystorie of saynt Werburge in dede
Besekyng all them for their good humanite
Whiche this litell proces shall beholde and se
For to adde and minishe and cause reformation
Where nede requireth after your discrecion

At her lyfe historiall example may take
Every great estate / quene / duchess / and lady
To encrease in vertue / and synne to forsake
To obserue mekenes and prayer deuoutly
With patience of hert / and almesdede truly
If thou be widowe / her lyfe well folowynge
Thou mayst be sure in blis to haue a wonnyng

If thou be religious / wearyng blacke besture
Take good example at this holy abbasse
Her lyfe wyl teche the how thou shult endure
In holy religion / opteynyng mycle grace
With mekenes / meditation / mesure in eche place
And howe thou shalt kepe thy sensualls thre
Consideryng in heuen thy rewarde to be

If thou be a virgin of hie or low degre
Takyng imitation of this virgin bright
Thou mayst well obserue the floure of chastite
And thy spouse shalbe the lord most of myght
On whom if thou attende redy day and nyght
Thou shalt haue merite as recordeth scripture
With .v. wise virgins after thy departure

The cause mouryng vs this werke to begyn
It was to auoyde slouth and idelnes
And most for the loue of this holy virgin
Whiche is our sufferayn lady and patrones
As for baudy balades full of wretchednes
And wanton wyld geftis / we purpose none to make
For drede of losyng tyme / clothed in besture blake

Go forth litell boke / Jesu be thy spede
And saue the alway from mytreportyng
Whiche art compiled for no clerke in dede
But for marchaunt men / haupng litell lernyng
And that rude people therby may haue knowyng
Of this holy virgin / and redolent rose
Which hath ben kept full longe tyme in close

To all auncient poetes litell boke submytte the
Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious
And to all other / whiche present now be
Fyrst to maister Chaucer / and Ludgate sentencious
Also to preignaut Barkley / now beynge religious
To inuenture Shelton and poet laureate
Praye them all of pardon both erly and late

If there be any thyng within this litell boke
Pleasaunt to the audience / contentyng the mynde
We praye all reders / whan they thereon do loke
To gyue thanks to god maker of mankynde
Nat to the translatour ignorant and blynde
For euery good dede / done in any cost
It cometh allonly of the holy gott.

Werburge.

f.ii.

Almyghty god both one two and the
 We desire the with humble supplicacion
 Save holy churche of thy benygnte
 And all ministres in holy religion
 Preserve the kyngis grace the Peeris the region
 Defende our monasterie and thy seruantes all
 And graunt vs by grace to come to blis eternall
 Finis.

A balade to the auctour.

O thou disciple of Cully most famous
 Nowe flourishyng in the floures of glorious eloquēce
 Like as appereth by your stile facundius
 Full worthe laude prayse and preeminence
 Put forth your werkes full sure of sentence
 Whose auctour / what though vncertayne be his name
 Of all the reders exalted shalbe in fame

Alas why shulde this delicious werke
 Thus surely sette by pured science
 To be examined by my rudenes all derke
 Whiche knowe full well myn insufficiēce
 Sith I haue lerned by longe experience
 That dulled age in werkes of poetry
 Must nedes gyue to poetes place and victory

Glorious god and kyng eternall
 We magnifie thy name as is but ryght
 Sith thou gaue to vs a floure most riall
 Redolent in cronicles with historical lycht
 Whiche nowe is departed from this temporall lycht
 The present pere of this transacion
 An. D. xiii. of Christis incarnation
 Culus anime propicietur deus.

An other balade.

O frutefull hystorie / o digne memoriall
Embawmed with doctrine of vertues infinite
With termes exquisite / and sence rectoriall
To spirituall hertes a singular delite
Fragrant and facunde / of english the exquisite
Holsome in doctrine / for those that it desire
Auaunce you to rede it / for it is exquisite
Folowynge the effect to kepe you from hell fire

Reioyse Chestre / reioyse ye religious
And thanke your maker of his benniuolence
That hath you gyuen suche treasure precious
Aduocatrice / in your most indigence
O virgin werburge / of double excellence
Conserue thy seruantes dayly famillier
Preseruyng them from inconuenience
The for tensue / that art theyr lode sterre

Amonges the whiche to thyn honour
One of thy clientes / with morall retorique
Hath chaunged newly / o mayde most swete flour
Thy legende latine / to our language publique
Preserue his soule / and make hym domestique
Within the heuyns / in whiche that thou art sonke
With deth preuent / he myght nothyng replique
Harry Bradeshaa of Chestre abbay monke

O cruell deth / o thesse vindicatyfe
To persons vertuous ennemy mortall
Of this good clerke thou hast abbregeed the lyfe
Preuentynge hym with thy dede stronge fatall

yet in despite of thy most venomous gall
He hath translate this legende profitable
And left it for holsome memoriall
To all his sequaces / a gyft most couenable

With polished termes / and good sence litterall
No place there boyde / but vertue aboundeth
The effect is manifest : for science ouer all
Rethorically thy sentence groundeth
All vices surely it confoundeth
She wynges the legende of this mayde pure
Her thenyng lyfe eche where redoundeth
Suche steppes folowynge / we hope in them tendure

An other balade to saynt werburge
With hert contrite accepte my supplicacion
Appoyne my fraylete and lyfe vacillaunt
Renegate and contumace in all obstinacion
Bewrapt with all synne / detestable and recreaunt
Touchsafe to supplie Jesu and geat graunt
Remysion to haue of my synnes generall
Greuous and thrall / that I may the auaunt
A gentill Werburge / to thy doctrine me call

Wherefore thy father / thy mother Ermenild,
Enclined both to dedes catholique
Ruffine and Kenrede / thy betherne were fulfild,
Both with great grace / through martyrdome both like
With diuers of thy hymne magnifique
Redact in the catholique papall
Geat me suche grace to boyde all synnes inique
And gentill Werburge to thy doctrine me call

With faithfull clennes / thy soule was sure preserved
 Euer contynuyng in doctrine celicall
 Refusyng banite / from vertue neuer swarued
 But in all grace remainyng principall
 Unto thy deth exhortyng great and small
 Ruled to be / to the preceptes diuine
 Gouverned by grace / were thy disciples all
 A gentill Werburge call me to suche doctrine

Wordly felicitye abiect from my courage
 Envy and pride / with lustes voluptuous
 Rancorous cupidite myn hert sore do aswage
 Bryng oymntmentes sanatiue for my sores dolorous
 Andlose thy succours / and be beniuolous
 Redy to be preseruyng me from pyne
 Gouverne my lyfe from all actes daungerous
 And gentill Werburge call me to thy doctrine

Be nowe beniuolent / whan I shall on the call
 Unto thy slaue / as my trust hath ben sure
 Leue vnto me for a memoriall
 Knowlege effectuall of thy lyfe pure
 Luyng ther after / and so tendure
 Euer in purite my lyfe to contynue
 yeldyng thanks for thy most holsome lurre
 Christ ouer vs holde his hande / al vices teshue. Amē.

¶ And thus endeth the lyfe and hystoꝛye of saynt Wer-
 burge. Imprinted by Richarde Pynson / printer to the
 kynges noble grace / With priuilege to hym graunted
 by our souerayne lorde the kyng. A. M. D. xxi.



GLOSSARY.

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GLOSSARY.

This Glossary is not intended so much to explain, as to exhibit in a tabular form those words now nearly obsolete which were in use at the time the poem was written.

A.

ACCEPTRE, accepted, 80.
ADRED, alarmed, 160.
AGO, agone, gone, 116.
ALBE, (tunic?) a white vesture ordered to be worn by the clergy in administering the eucharist, 154.
ALIENAT, alienated, 203, 204.
ALLONLY, all only, only, 174, 204, 209.
AMPLIAT, enlarged, 148.
ANENDES, anent, in reference to, 100.
AT AFTER, after, 95, 193.
ATTEMPTED, tempted, 191.
ATTEMPTEN, plural of attempt, 100.
AUDACITY, courage, 2.

B.

BEFOUND, found, 8.
BEN, be, are, 1, 75, 111, 117, 134, 151, 186, 189, 202, 204.
BENESON, benediction, 90.
BESEKE, beseech, 189.
BESELY, busily, 1.
BESYNES, business, 2.
BORDE, "high board lord," those seated at the upper table at a feast, 60.
BOTH TWO, both the one and the other, 15, 57, 58.
BOWNE, bent, prepared, 162.
BRENNED, burned, 34, 39, 49, 139, 141.

BRENT, burnt, 60.
BRUTES, uncivilised people, 149, 152.
BROWDRED, embroidered, 60.
BUXUM, obedient, 1.
BYFORNE, before, 38.

C.

CADUCE, frail, feeble, 115, 118.
CANABY, canopy, 146.
CARLE, churl, clown, 38.
CELEBRATE, celebrated, 146, 181.
CELICALL, heavenly, 213.
CEMETERIE, 151, 184.
CESSE, to stop, verb act. 195.
CHERE, countenance, 102.
CHEST, coffin, 125.
CIRCUMFULCED, surrounded by brightness, 76, 150, *circumfulgeo*.
CLERKE, educated persons, 4, 209.
CLYPPED, called, 32.
COMEN, plur. of come, 128, 144.
COMPULACYON, computation, 5.
CONDIGNE, worthy, 199.
CONGREGATE, congregated, 188.
CONOMINAT, akin, 191.
CONSECRATE, consecrated, 93.
CONYNGE, skill, 134.
CORONATE, crowned, 115, 144, 147, 158, 175, 176, 181.
CORPORACE, corporate, a linen cloth spread under the chalice and paten at the eucharist, 154.

GLOSSARY.

COST, charge, also, side, 177, 182.
COSTY, a son coté, on his side, 164.
COSYNS, kinsmen generally, 25, 170, 171, 191.
COTIDIAN, daily, 80, 143.
COUNCEYLED, concealed, 45.
COUNTERED, encountered, 9.
COVETISE, covetousness, 2.
CREATE, created, 2, 190.
CREATURE, creator, 1, &c. &c.
CRUCIATE, tormented, 101, 166, 204.
CRUELITY, cruelty, 198.
CUBICLE, bedchamber, 1, 77.
CUP, "to sit between the cup and the wall," probably a common term for a drunkard, 2.
CURE, a care or charge; as of a parish, &c. 54, 87, 107.

D.

DAN, master. 185, 186, from Dominus.
DARING, suffering pain, 98, from dare, pain. *Bailey's Dict.*
 Dredefully daringe, i. e. slinking along for fear, as if they would hide themselves, from view.
 "The dere, in the dellun,
 They droupen and daren."
Anturs of Arthur at the Tarnewathelan.
 "In this dale I droupe and dare.
 For dern dedes that done me dere."—*Minst.*
 "Now or thai darend all for drede,
 That war before so stout and gay."—*Ibid.*
 "Blotir," to squat, skowke, ly close to the ground like a daring larke, or af-frighted fowle.—*Cotgrave.*
DECORATE, decorated, 75, 96, 120, 126, 206.
DECAUR, 146, decur, 206, honour.
DEDICATE, dedicated, 104.
DEPAYRED, decayed, 125, deperir, *Fr.* dis-perdere, *Lat.*

DEROGATION, damage, 173.
DESCRYBEN, plur. of describe, 8.
DESCRYPCYON, for destruction, 97.
DESIDERY, desire, 56, 108.
DESSE, high desse, seat of state, 61.
DEVOYRE, devoir, respect, 25, 58, 126.
DIGHT, clothed, 144.
DOLOUR, grief, 167.
DO WAY, begone, put aside, 67, 83.
DONE, plur. of do, 67.
DYFFERRE, defer, delay, 30.
DYGNE, worthy, 109, 152, 211.
DYLATED, magnified, published, 9, 75, 96, 150, 168.
DYLECTACYON, delight, 27, 155.
DYSPENT, spent, 94.
DYVERSITY, dissension, 89.
DYVYDENT, dividing, 8, 10.

E.

EDIFIED, built, from edifier, *Fr.* 151, 153, 158, 177.
ELECTE, elected, 85, 93, 159, 190.
ELEVATE, raised up, 48, 125, 126, 161.
EMPAIRED, injured, 160.
EMPEIRYNG, inflaming? 195.
ENDURATE, hardened, cruel, 159, 191.
ENFORCE, strengthen, 34.
ENORMENTES, ornaments, 154, 156, 165, 180, 184.
ENOWERNED, inured, environed, 127.
ENQUIRED, for required, 80.
ENSUING, pursuing, 41; during, 177.
EQUIPOLENT, of equal power, 11.
EQUIVALENT, proportional, 167.
EXPULSE, expel, 6, 88, 111, 121, 142, 151, 152, 177.
EXTINCTED, extinguished, 196.

F.

FACUNDE, 211.
FACUNDIOUS, eloquent, 209, 210.

GLOSSARY.

FEMINITY, womanhood, 61.

FERE, 76; in fere, 11, 59, 164, together in company. See Chaucer, *Cant. Tales*, v. 4748, 4814. Ang. S. *foera, fera, socius*.

FERRER, far, 63.

FISNAMY, physiognomy, 103, 126.

FLOURES OF EXPERIENCE, of approved worth, 5.

FLOURYNGE, flourishing, 9, 23, 34, 135, 181, 209.

FOLLOWEN, follow, 97.

FRAGYLL, light, vain, 81, 103.

FRAGYLYTE, light conduct, 69.

FRAYLTE, inconstancy of mind, 3.

G.

GALWAY SCOT, Scotch from Galloway, 173.

GALWEDY, Galloway, from mediæval Latin word, *Gallovidia*, 162.

GATE, road, at no gate, no where, by no means, 89.

— got, begot, 11, 12, 13, 14, 91, 118.

GAUNTES, Gannets, or any geese, 97, 98.

GEAF, perhaps from gavel, progenies masculine; vide Skinner in *voc. forens*. Geaf therefore seems here to mean male descendant; of his eldest son Shem descending plain, i. e. in Saxon's tongue, geaf, 14.

GEAT, get, 212.

GLEBE, earth, soil, 9; vital glebe, mortal body, 129.

GOET, Goths, 173.

GOTES, Goths, 140, 162. Goets and Gotes, being used in connection with Danes, probably means Goths; but as they are also used with Galway and Galwedy, they may refer to the Manxmen, who at one time possessed Galloway.

GRAFFE, graft, shoot, 75.

GUERDON, recompence, deserts, 84.

H.

HAD UPON, placed upon, 49.

HALLYNGE, aulæum, hangings, 61; "An hallynge, auleum, anabatrū, *Versus*. Vela vel aulæa cortinæ sunt anabatra." *Catholicon anglicanum* MS. Dict. inedited, dated 1483.

HALL, usually a large tent for warlike uses, seems to mean the complete set of hangings for a chamber. Thus Margery Argeintein in 1427 bequeaths "a steyned hall."—*Rokewode's Suffolk*, p. 290.

HARNEYS, armour, 9.

HASE, have or hast, 117, &c.

HE, for she, 23.

HOLLY, holily, 95.

HUMANYTE, courtesy, 25.

HYGHT, named, 15, 16.

HISTORIAL, historical, 10, 15, 208.

I.

ICHE, each, 112.

IERARCHYSES, Hierarchies, 61, 115.

INFORTUNE, misfortune, 194.

INSTRUCTE, instructed, 75.

IN SYGHT, in presence, 83, 161.

INTERIOUSLY, internally, 183.

JUTES, people of Jutland, 6.

K.

KYNDE, course of Kynde, course of nature, 98, 106, 193.

L.

LAD, one of low condition. Lad to wed a lady is inconvenient, 38.

LAYTE, probably lightening, akin to laye, or lowe, a flame, 138.

GLOSSARY.

LEED, laid, buried, 19.
 LENT, dwelling, abiding, Sax. word, Lenge.
 to dwell, 98, 119.
 LETTEN, let, permitted, 183.
 LETTYNGE, obstructing, 187.
 LEVE YE ME, believe me, 32, 84.
 LEVER, rather, preferred, 76.
 LOSE, destroy, 39.
 LOVERS, friends, 47.
 LUSTY eloquence, vigorous, 37.
 LYCENSE, leave, farewell, 65, 78, permis-
 sion, 6, 36, 43, 99; 136, 152, 158, 186.
 LYHTNESSE, nimble, quick, 114.
 LYST, like, desire, 135.
 LYEN, plur. of lye, 11.

M.

MACHORYTE, anchorite, 103.
 MACULATE, defiled, 104, 126.
 MAGNIFIEN, magnify, 169, 197, 207.
 MAKEN, make, 134.
 MARGARYTE, pearl, or flower, daisy, 16.
 MAY, maiden, young woman, 27.
 MEAN, intercession, 172. "Meene, or me-
 dyatowre, mediator."—*Prompt. Parv.*
 "Woman that is meane for any man.
 advocatte.—*Palsgrave.*
 MEDE, reward, 13, 17, 18.
 MEDLED, mingled inconveniently, 117.
 MEMORALL, memorable, 8.
 MEMORATIVE, memorable, 41, 153.
 MEMOROUS, memorable, 6, 11, 104, 185.
 MENDKS, amends, 47.
 MERCYABLE, pitiful, 95, 102, 175.
 MINISSE, diminish, 208.
 MONYALL, recluse, nun, 4, 81, 115, 145,
 168, 197, 205; monialis, *Lat.* moniale,
Fr.
 MOYNES, nun, 55, 59, 68, 80, 93, 130;
 moinesse, *old Fr.*
 MUTATION, taking the contrary course, 190.
 MYCLE, much, great, 144, 145, 146, 153,
 157, 172, 174, &c.
 MYNYSTERS, servants, waiters, 64, 94.

N.

NAT, not, 135, &c. &c.
 NAY, it is no nay, there is no denying it,
 134.
 NE, nor, 54, 83, 100, 102, 117, 148.
 NOMINATE, named, 20, 22, 87, 88, 93,
 &c. &c.
 NOMTYNTOY, nomination, mention, 7.

O.

OBSERVEN, plur. of observe, 1.
 ODIBLE, odious, 138.
 OE, before, 95, 169, 172, 194.
 ORDINANCE, direction, preparation, 62.
 ORBLS, or else, 36, 38, 147, 202.
 OUT OF PRESENCE, out of sight, 41.

P.

PARAGE, parentage, 69.
 PARESSEN, parishioners, 194.
 PASSING, surpassing, 23, 27.
 PAYNYMS, pagans, 140, 141.
 PAYNT, flatter, 2.
 PENALITY, punishment, 174, 198.
 POLLERS, plunderers, 89.
 POLLUTE, defiled, 129.
 POLLYNGE, pillaging, 139.
 POLYTYKE, sagacious, 20.
 PRENOMINATE, forenamed, 139, 190.
 PREORDINATE, predestined, 143.
 PREPARAT, prepared, 1, 62, 114.
 PREPOTENT, very powerful, 14, 76, 182.
 PRETENDED, foreshewed, portended, 28.
 PROGENY, progenitors, 38.
 PROLONGING, postponing, 33.
 PROMISSION, permission, 129.
 PROMYTTE or promyt, promise, 178, 189.
 PROMYTTYNGE, 163, 166.
 PROMOTERS, informers, 89.
 PRYCE, prize, preeminence, 9.

GLOSSARY.

PRYME, daybreak, 40.
 PRYMATE, supreme governor, 1, 4.
 PUDICALL, chaste, modest, 142.
 PULCHRYTUD, 30.
 PYGHT, pitched, set up, 162, 181.
 PYNE, sorrow, 213.
 PYNNE, confine, 98. "Pynnyne, or put yn a pynfold, intrudo, detrudo." *Prompt. parv.* Ang. Sax. pyndan, includere.

R.

RECIDIVATION, relapse, 150.
 RECOURSED, ran back again, 42.
 REDACT, 212, from redactus, collected; gathered into the general body.
 REFUTED, rejected, cast aside, 57.
 REGALTY, regality, royalty, 16.
 RELIQUE, 121, 124, 127, 143, 144, 146, 153, 202.
 REMANENT, remaining, 152.
 REPAIRED, repaired, 180.
 RESEMBLED, reassembled, 119.
 RESOLUTION, decay, resolving to original state, 123, 125, 129.
 RESOLVE, dissolve, melt, 54, 129, 130, 142.
 REVESSHED, revested, clothed again, 127.
 REWARDED, rewarded, 84.
 ROBORATE, corroborate, confirm, 91.
 ROWME, place, rank, 56.
 RUDE, uneducated, 127.
 RUTILANT, glittering, brilliant, 128, 145, 205.
 RYVED, rife, frequent, 140.
 RYDDE, quit, relieved from, 109.

S.

SAD, saad, sayd. Sedate, discrete, 2, 23, 24, 27, 29, 38, 69, 81, 149, 155, 173.
 SADNESS, discretion, 51, 57, 69.
 SANCTYMONYAL, holy person, 96.
 SAPIENTLY, wisely, 37.

SAUTYNGE, assaulting, 163.
 SAYNE, plur. of say, 14.
 SEGREGATE, separated, 159.
 SENDE for sent, 10, 148, 149, 152, 156, 165, 183, 188, 202.
 SENSUALS, essentials, 205, 208.
 SEQUACES, successors, 212.
 SEQUENS, 197. The name of a particular kind of service book. Lat. med. Sequentiarius, sequentialis. "Sequences." were chanted between the lessons at mass.

"Fiat mainte sequance et mainte hymne."

SEYN, Sitting, Synod, 90.
 SHALMES, musical instrument, 63.
 SOTHE, truth, 2.
 SPYRE, spike, tendril, 60. Corn spires when the flowers are forming. "Spyre of corne or herbe, hastula."—*Prompt. Parv.* "Spyre of corne, barbe du ble."—*Palsgrave.*
 In the Wickliffe version, Isaiah 35 7. "Grenenesse of rehed and Spier schal growe in dennes in whiche dwelliden dragouns bifor" and Isai. 18. 2. "Papius is a kynde of spier so great that bokis mowen be maid thereof." In a curious treatise on herbs, &c. Arund. MS. 42. "Pliny says, c. 81. ther is calamus scriptoris, swuche a stable as scryueners wryten with, and that is a reed spere; for by olde tyme, ar us of penne were fowndyn men wryten with reedspyre, &c. p. 55. 6.

STABLE, steady, firm, 27, 32.
 STREETS, the milky way, 28: In German it is termed "die Milch-strasse"—as Phœbus surpassed other planets or stars, so doth, &c. perhaps, however, the word is a misprint for "starres."
 STUDY, "stode styll in a study," mused in perplexity, was in a brown study, 98.
 SUFFERAUNT, suffering, patient, 92.

GLOSSARY.

SUING, ensuing, following, 61.
 SUPERNALL, from above, 41.
 SUPPLE HER ROWME, supply her place, 93.
 SUPPLIE, supplicate, 212.
 SURGES, wax tapers, 144, 154, Fr.
 cierges, "cereus cereolus, serge." Vo-
 cab. Lat. Eng. Roy. MS. ix. c. xvii.
 "Ceroferarius, a bearer of serge." Harl.
 MS. 2257.

SYKERNESSE, security, 50.
 SYTH, since, 4.

T.

TAMYSMOUTH, mouth of Thames, 139.
 THRALL, bondage, 99, 113, 115, 117, 193,
 207, 212.
 — v. imprisoned, 115, 183.
 THO, those, 25, 58.
 TIMOROUS, occasioning alarm, 162.
 TOLLYNG, knocking, pulling, 193.
 TORTUOUS, torturing, 171.
 TOYNES, tunes, (Prologue of J. T.)
 TRANSCEND, pass over, 189.
 TRANSLACYON, removal, 124, 128, 146,
 159, 185.
 TRANSLATED, removed, 11, 79, 124, 128,
 153, 157, 181. converted, changed, 48,
 49, 86, 97.
 TRAYNE, trap, 39, 43.
 TROW YE, think ye, 83.
 TUYCYON, government, 5, 51. protection,
 111, 136, 145.
 TUMYLATE, buried, 26, 108, 126, 158.
 TWYN, tinc, loss, sorrow, 160.

U.

UKNOWINGE, unknown, 99.

UNKYNDE, unnatural, unhealthy, 167.
 UNNETH, scarcely, 46. Saxon adv.
 URE, use, 64; Ure for use occurs in writers
 about the age of Bradshaw.
 USING HIM, conducting himself, 87.

V.

VALAUNCE, valour, 9.
 VARNAUNT, verdant, 23, 104, 129.
 VENARE, VENERY, hunting, 8, 149.
 VENGEABLE, revengeful, 39.
 VERAY, verily, 100.
 VIRGINALL, virginlike, 23, 68, 110.
 VOLUPTÉ, voluptuousness, 81.
 VYLAYNE PEOPLE, of no rank, 36, 38.

W.

WANDELES, Vandals, 140.
 WETE, know, 82.
 WIS, e wis, I know, 156.
 WHOME, home, 189, 192, 201.
 WHYLOM, formerly, 3, 4, 20, 21, 117, 136,
 147, 209. Idleness whylom, former
 idleness, 3.
 WODELY, madly, 163.
 WOO, woe begone, sorrowful, 68.
 WROKEN, from wreke, revengeful, 39.

Y.

YCHEON, each one, 113.
 YERLE, early, 165.
 YLNES, evil, or idleness, 28.
 YMPE, graft, scion, 75.
 YOURE, yore, long ago, 60.

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- Alfrydus, 5, 138. Alfredus, Alredus, Aluredus, see Alredus, Biog. Dict. born at Beverley in Yorkshire, a secular priest, canon and treasurer of St. John's, Beverley. Wrote a History of Britain from the settlement of Brutus! to the year 1126, in which year he died. Hearne published an edition of his History, at Oxford, 1716, with a preface.
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